This Dissertation Committee for Olin Robert Bjork certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Interfacing Milton: The Supplementation of *Paradise Lost*

Committee:

_____
John Rumrich, Supervisor

_____
Janine Barchas

_____
Jerome Bump

_____
Guy Raffa

_____
Margaret Syverson

Interfacing Milton: The Supplementation of *Paradise Lost*

by

Olin Robert Bjork, B. A.; M. A.

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For my parents,

Professors Robert and Elizabeth Bjork,

who immersed me in academia before I could read,

and whose infectious love for learning led me down this path.

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Interfacing Milton: The Supplementation of *Paradise Lost*

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Olin Robert Bjork, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: John Rumrich

Jacques Derrida argued that a supplement "adds only to replace." Since the blind Milton dictated his epic to amanuenses, the text of *Paradise Lost* may be conceived as a supplement to an aural performance. This dissertation itself supplements another project, a digital "audiotext" or classroom edition of *Paradise Lost* on which I am collaborating with Professor John Rumrich and others. In the audiotext, we reassert the duality of the work as both a print text and an oral epic by integrating an audio recording with an electronic text of the poem. This pairing is informed by our own experiences teaching *Paradise Lost* as well as by cognitive research demonstrating that comprehension increases when students read and hear a text sequentially or simultaneously. As both a wellspring of the audiotext project and a meditation on its aims, this dissertation investigates the actual effects on readers of print and digital supplements putatively designed to enhance their appreciation or study of the work. The first two chapters examine the rationale and influence of the authorial and editorial matter added to early editions. The final two chapters explore the ways in which digital technology is changing

how scholars and readers interact with *Paradise Lost* and other works of literature. I begin by examining why the first edition of *Paradise Lost* arrived in 1667 bearing no front matter other than a title page. In Chapter Two, I argue that critics have undervalued the interpretive significance of the prose summaries or Arguments that Milton appended to *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*. Chapter Three relates the current emphasis on electronic textual encoding in editorial theory to the ideological dominance of Richard Bentley's conjectural approach in the early seventeenth century and of Fredson Bowers's copy-text approach in the 1960s and 70s. Chapter Four introduces the audiotext project and contrast its goals with those of other projects in the Digital Humanities. The audiotext's interface offers multiple viewing modes, enabling the user to display the reading text alone or in parallel with annotations and other supplements. Unlike prior editions and archives, therefore, it accommodates both immersive and analytical reading modes.

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Introduction

The earliest account of John Milton's life relates that, several years after *Paradise Lost* was first published in 1667, the poet laureate John Dryden visited him and requested permission to adapt his blank-verse epic into a drama in heroic couplets. Milton reportedly gave Dryden "leave to tagge his verses."[1] An embellished version of this anecdote, published anonymously in *The Monitor* (6 April 1713), renders Milton's phrase as "tagg my points,"[2] which clarifies both the pronoun reference and the metaphor. "Points" were the ribbons or laces by which a seventeenth-century man fastened his breeches to his doublet or waistcoat. In Restoration culture, it was fashionable to "tag" matching ornaments to the ends of the points. Similarly, in a heroic couplet—the literary vogue established by Dryden—the end of each line is tagged with a rhyming syllable. Milton inclined to more intricate patterns of rhyme in his lyrics, especially as he grew older, and eschewed rhyme in his longer poems with the exception of a few passages. Furthermore, he had sided with his friend Sir Robert Howard in his battle against rhymed plays.[3] It should not surprise us then that, if his leave was actually given at all, it came

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[1] John Aubrey, "John Milton," in *'Brief Lives,' Chiefly of Contemporaries, set down by John Aubrey, between the Years 1669 & 1696*, ed. Andrew Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 2:72. Aubrey's manuscripts of biographical sketches on Milton and other figures were first published in 1813.

[2] Helen Darbishire, *The Early Lives of Milton* (London: Constable & Co., 1932), 335. *The Monitor* was a short-lived poetry journal maintained by the poet laureate Nahum Tate.

[3] Howard co-authored with Dryden *The Indian Queen* (1664), a play in heroic couplets, but disparaged this form in the preface to *Four New Plays* (1665). In *Of Dramatick Poesie* (1667), Dryden assigned Howard's arguments to Crites, a defeated interlocutor. See James A. Winn, *John Dryden and his World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 264-65.

with a metaphor intended as a witty jibe.[4] According to *The Monitor* account, Milton added, "you have my leave to tagg 'em, but some of 'em are so Awkward and Old Fashion'd that I think you had as good leave 'em as you found 'em." Milton probably meant that such lines should be omitted, but in Dryden's unperformed dramatic adaptation, *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man* (1677), some lines from Milton's poem appear verbatim.

Today, we can read the entirety of the poem at a variety of Web sites. Unlike Dryden, the designers of these sites never received even grudging permission from Milton to tag his verses—this time, with the "start" and "end" tags of HTML elements. Yet the poet's words have never reached readers in an untagged state. They have been edited, illustrated, and annotated. Furthermore, for language theorists in the tradition of Baudouin de Courtenay and Ferdinand de Saussure, written words are merely the labels we attach to units of oral discourse, which are in turn manifestations of conceptual elements.[5] Blind Milton dictated the poem to amanuenses; later, a fair copy of the manuscript was sent to the print-shop, where any number of transformative operations

[4] There are a couple reasons to doubt that the encounter took place as described by Aubrey, much less *The Monitor*. First, Milton's contract with Samuel Simmons ceded to the publisher full rights to *Paradise Lost* "and any other Booke or Manuscript of the same tenor or subject." Dryden needed to obtain permission from Simmons, therefore, not Milton. Second, the tagging metaphor also appears in Andrew Marvell's commendatory poem "On *Paradise Lost*," which first appeared in the second edition of the epic (1674). Although Marvell may have been aware of Milton's remark, it is also possible that his poem generated or at least colored the biographical anecdote.

[5] See Stephen R. Anderson, "The Kazan School: Baudouin de Courtenay and Kruszewski," in *Phonology in the Twentieth Century: Theories of Rules and Theories of Representations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 56-82; Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Roy Harris (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1983), 18-31.

took place before the first edition was bound and sold.[6] The sequence of the poem's representations follows the historical evolution of communication technologies—from speech to manuscript to print to electronic text. As the work moves from stage to stage, the voice and presence of the living Milton seems ever more remote.

We can never completely forget, however, that *Paradise Lost* came into the world as an oral performance. In the long nineteenth century, the motif of Milton dictating *Paradise Lost* to his daughters was a commonplace in literary painting.[7] In most of these paintings, the daughter serving as his amanuensis gazes attentively at her blind father rather than down at the manuscript, as if he were transmitting the poem visually as well as verbally. If we are now too indoctrinated in high print culture to privilege a literary event over its record, the recitation over the text, the poem itself encourages us to do so. Not only does it fulfill the conventions of epic, traditionally a vocal genre, the persona of the poet describes himself as singing words that his muse has sung to him by night. To this nocturnal relay, Milton's dictation itself defers. The text, therefore, testifies to a process of divine inspiration for which it stands as the sole evidence. At the same time, it provides no account of the process that brought it into being—the act of transcription.

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[6] On Milton's punctuation and spelling versus that of his scribes and compositors, see Mindele Treipp, *Milton's punctuation and Changing English Usage, 1582-1676* (London: Methuen, 1970); John T. Shawcross, "Orthography and the Text of *Paradise Lost*," in *Language and Style in Milton; a Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of* "*Paradise Lost*," ed. Ronald David Emma and John T. Shawcross (New York: F. Ungar, 1967), 120-53; John Creaser, "Editorial Problems in Milton," *Review of English Studies* 34-35 (1983-84): 279-303; 45-60. For printing irregularities and errors, see Harris F. Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works Reproduced in Photographic Facsimile*, 4 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1943-48).

[7] Artists who have depicted Milton dictating include George Romney (1793), Henry Fuseli (1794), James Barry (1807), Henry Joseph Fradelle (1817), Eugène Delacroix (1826), B. R. Haydon (c. 1835), Soma Orlai Petrics (1862), and Mihály Munkácsy (c. 1878).

The text comes as an addition to that which it replaces. As such, it exhibits what Jacques Derrida calls "supplementarity" or "the logic of the supplement."[8] This is a double logic because the supplement, which supposedly points to something external to it (in this case, the epic poet's song), marks the absence of that exteriority (only the silent text remains).

If we insist that *Paradise Lost* did not expire with Milton's voice, the question remains as to whether the work exists in some form (or forms) today. The term *work* has traditionally been understood in both a material and a conceptual sense. As a material phenomenon, G. Thomas Tanselle contends that "a literary work can be transmitted only indirectly, by processes that may alter it."[9] In this view, the work amounts to a sequence of words assembled fleetingly in the author's mind and represented by one or more texts, each of which affords only a partial view of the work in its ideal but ephemeral totality. Jerome J. McGann opposes this intentionalist conception, defining a work as "the global set of all the texts and poems which have emerged in the literary production and reproduction processes."[10] By "poems" McGann means specific versions or editions, whether authorial or not. This "social" view of the literary work is reminiscent of T. S. Eliot's notion of the literary tradition. For Eliot, each new work changes the tradition "ever so slightly."[11] For McGann, each new edition changes the work minimally for society as a whole but profoundly for those who read that edition. Just as editors play a

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[8] *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1997), 144-45.

[9] *A Rationale of Textual Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 17.

[10] *The Textual Condition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 32.

[11] "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*, 7th ed. (London: Methuen & Co., 1950), 50.

role in the construction of the material work, readers play a role in the constitution of the conceptual work. McGann claims that "there is a "work" called *Paradise Lost* which supervenes its many texts and its many versions; to William Blake that work was one thing, whereas to William Empson it was something else; and of course to any one of us the work we call *Paradise Lost* can be, will be, reconstituted once again."[12] In McGann's socialized editorial theory, therefore, the conceptual work is not the meaning that the author attempted to communicate through a document, as it is in the intentionalist school, but rather the meanings that the document in fact communicates. Whereas for Tanselle a work of literature is materially and conceptually stable, for McGann it is endlessly fluid.

Gérard Genette occupies a middle ground between Tanselle and McGann. In his study *Seuils* (1987), translated as *Paratexts* (1997), Genette presents a socialized account of the material work and an intentionalist notion of the conceptual work. On a material level, he asserts that a literary work consists of a text and a class of mediating elements that comprise its "paratext." Although this term has been adopted by literary and textual studies, critics tend to oversimplify the category of objects it labels. For example, an entry in the glossary of William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbot's *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies* (1999) defines the paratext as

> the peritext, consisting of such items as titles, authors' names, forewords, dedications, prefaces, epigraphs, notes, and afterwords, all of which frame a text, and the epitext, consisting of texts not physically appended to the text in question but associated with its public and private history, such as advertisements, reviews,

[12] "Theory of Texts," *London Review of Books*, February 18, 1988, 21.

author's statements and correspondence about it, and records of its production and publication."[13]

This definition would be quite adequate were it not for the fact that Genette requires an item to receive approval from the author or the author's agent prior to its admission into the paratext. Prefaces and notes by editors unaffiliated with the author do not qualify. Genette makes this stipulation because he prefers to focus his attention on how authors and their associates deploy paratextual elements to advance particular readings and discourage others. His approach suggests that similar interventions in posthumous editions do not contribute to the work materially and may lead away from it conceptually.

Genette's intentionalism allows him to discuss the functions of each species of paratext in a wide range of works but prevents him from charting the history of any particular work from its origin to its most recent edition. A critic who is willing to drop the authorization criterion, on the other hand, has the opportunity to analyze the history of a work's embodiment in posthumous editions, which in most cases are exponentially more numerous than authoritative ones. To make such a study manageable, therefore, the critic must limit the focus to one or two works. R. G. Moyles, for example, in *The Text of Paradise Lost: A Study in Editorial Procedure* (1985), provides a three-hundred-year "transmission history" of the poem. He evaluates the treatment of the text in a variety of posthumous editions as well as the authorial documents. Although Moyles mentions paratextual features and other textual supplements in passing, his overriding concern is with the text's journey toward definitiveness and its subsequent modernization.

[13] William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbot, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, 3rd ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 1999), 155.

In this dissertation, I reverse this priority by examining how instances of supplementation in editions of *Paradise Lost* situate the text and recreate the work. I regard the conceptual work from the standpoint of reception as well as intention and include within the category of the material work supplements that editors have added. Eliot writes that the poet who is aware of the fluidity of tradition is "aware of great difficulties and responsibilities."[14] Similarly, the editor of a canonical work of literature bears the burden of presenting that work to the next wave of readers. The editorial supplements reveal how that editor envisions the text's reception. When an editor adds an explanatory apparatus to an edition, for example, he or she postulates a reader that will require that apparatus to achieve a sufficient degree of comprehension and appreciation of the work. Alastair Fowler's heavily footnoted edition (1968), for example, privileges an analytical reading over an immersive one. Conversely, Philip Pullman's *Paradise Lost* (2005) includes no annotations because he views them as obstacles to immersion. In his introduction, Pullman recommends that we read the text out loud and straight through, without pausing to decipher the meaning of individual words and lines.[15] In his afterword, he recommends that we now read an annotated edition, silently.[16]

If authorial and editorial supplements make statements about the reader, they also cast the text in a new light. In *How Milton Works* (2001), Stanley Fish demonstrates Milton's awareness of this fact by subjecting his notion of the Bible to Derrida's model

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[14] "Tradition and the Individual Talent," 50.

[15] *Milton: Paradise Lost*, introduced by Philip Pullman, ed. Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3.

[16] Ibid., 371.

of supplementarity. Fish points to a passage in Milton's *Of Prelatical Episcopacy* (1641) where he argues that "Scripture is the onely book left to us of Divine Authority, and not in anything more Divine then in the all-sufficiency it has to furnish us."[17] Yet despite this "all-sufficiency," Milton finds it customary to seek after tradition rather than rely on the source, "as if divine scripture wanted a supplement, and were to be eek't out" (*YP* 1.626). Fish sees the following rationale behind Milton's prohibition of patristic texts:

> if the Scriptures must be eked out, they are not all-sufficient, they are not divine. Indeed, the case is even worse than that: if the Scriptures are deficient, then they are not complete—are not, in some sense, themselves—until their deficiency is supplied by some addition or supplement; and since that supplement can be supplied only by human agents—by the very men and women whose needs the scriptures supposedly furnish—the Scriptures turn out to be fashioned, made into what they are, by those who look to them as an independent (free-standing, objective, acontextual) source of authority.[18]

Few Christians would accept Fish's interpretation of "all-sufficiency." For Catholics, the traditions of the Church constitute an intermediary between the reader and the scriptures. For Protestants of Milton's ilk, the inner illumination of the Spirit that inspired the scriptures is required to interpret them. Any defect, therefore, can easily be deflected from the text to the reader—whose light has been snuffed out by popery or sin. A

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[17] *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953-1982), 1:625. Because of the volume of Milton's prose works, I have elected to cite a modern edition. This is standard practice in Milton studies. Henceforth, this edition will be cited parenthetically as *YP*.

[18] Fish, *How Milton Works* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 216-17.

particular translation, however, may prove deficient. For this reason, Milton read the bible in the original languages and advocated that clergymen do likewise, in order to correct the errors and superstitions of their congregations (*YP* 7:317). Milton also left behind a rather extensive biblical supplement, *De Doctrina Christiana*, the very existence of which appears to contradict his earlier stance in *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*. The full title of this treatise, however, includes the phrase "*Ex Sacris Duntaxat Libris Petita*" ("Drawn From the Sacred Scriptures Alone"). Evidently, Milton approved of a doctrine informed by logical analysis of the text rather than tradition, and wanted to spare those who could read Latin the trouble of organizing biblical content in a systematic fashion. *Paradise Lost*, unlike *De Doctrina Christiana*, does not represent itself as a supplement drawn from the Holy Scriptures.[19] Instead, it asserts an essential parity with them, claiming the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Milton upholds personal revelation, not critical tradition, as a legitimate supplement to the Bible.

Paradise Lost now has its own critical tradition with which readers can supplement the text. The very existence of a tradition calls into question the "all-sufficiency" of the text in furnishing us with the work that Milton intended. Relying solely on the text is difficult if not impossible, however, because a notion of the work inevitably precedes each reading. One might argue that, given an ideal reader, a modern edition's introduction, notes, and appendixes are unnecessary. But this is just another way of saying that the required supplements reside in the ideal reader's brain—or library.

[19] One might argue that scripture is as much a supplement to *Paradise Lost* as the reverse—the poem offers a fuller rendering of the Adam and Eve narrative than Genesis does and relevant passages from Genesis are often excerpted in editions of the poem, not vice versa.

Either way, the supplements are present, signaling the deficiencies that they supply. The rationale of remediation can be sidestepped, of course, by portraying the additions as features or enhancements. But this alternative rationale begs the question to which the other provides the answer. Together, the two justifications constitute what I term the (double) logic of the textual supplement.

Paradise Lost presents a fascinating case for studying this logic because the first edition went on sale in 1667 with only a title page as front matter. The supplementation began a full year later, when the publisher Samuel Simmons added a prose summary of each book ("the Argument") to the unsold copies, noting that readers had requested them. Perhaps the Argument functions as an aid to memory and comprehension, or as a crutch to those who find the poetry opaque. But its presence also suggests that the text was deemed to lack sufficient clarity or logical organization. If so, can a synopsis hope to remedy such a deficiency or only belie it? For the fourth edition of 1688, the bookseller Jacob Tonson commissioned the first illustrations of the poem. *Paradise Lost* is now among the most illustrated works in English literature,[20] leading some Miltonists to conclude that it captures artists' imaginations. Eliot, however, complained that the poem tends to evoke vague or incoherent images,[21] and from this perspective the designs can be understood as attempts to fill in missing visual details. Then again, the pictures may cater to those afflicted with dullness of the mind's eye. In 1695, Patrick Hume's

[20] For a statistically-based discussion of *Paradise Lost*'s popularity as a source for artists relative to Milton's other works as well as those by Shakespeare and Spenser, see Marcia Pointon, *Milton and English Art* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), xxiii-xliii.

[21] *Milton* (London: G. Cumberlege, 1947), 17.

Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost provided the most thorough non-authorial commentary ever completed for an English poem. According to Earl Roy Miner, William Moeck, and Steven Edward Jablonski, editors of a new variorum commentary on *Paradise Lost*, "Hume demonstrated the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Italian architecture of the poem well before anything similar was shown for Chaucer, Spenser, or Shakespeare."[22] The editors make the commonsensical assumption that the poem already possesses this architecture. Yet for most readers, the poem's intertextual structure remains hidden until an annotator like Hume unearths it for them. This failing can safely be assigned to their ignorance of classical literature, but the fact remains that for them the work comes into its full being through an explanatory apparatus.

To make his epic more accessible, Milton might have chosen to annotate the text, as Abraham Cowley had done in *Davideis*, *a Sacred Poem of the Troubles of David* (1656). But he probably anticipated that readers would record their own notes in the margins and those who failed to catch his learned allusions would still be enchanted by the sound of the words. Some contemporary readers of Paradise Lost, however, were taken aback by the absence of a rhyme scheme. In response, Milton supplemented the poem with a brief essay defending the blank verse and arguing that "true musical delight" does not consist in the "jingling sound of like endings." For Milton, the music of the poem inheres in the text and breaks forth when the lines are subvocalized or spoken

[22] *Paradise Lost, 1668-1968: Three Centuries of Commentary* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2004), 15. The editors add that "Milton had encouraged such thoughts by making sure that this poem was the first in English published on ruled pages with lines numbered by fives." The line numbers disappear in the second and third editions, however, only to reappear in the fourth. They seem to have been associated with larger format editions.

aloud. He assumed that those who failed to appreciate that music lacked "judicious ears," not the capacity to educe a rhythm and harmony from graphic symbols on the page. In the present era of predominantly silent reading, however, the majority of readers may lack this ability. And the printed edition, of course, cannot give voice to its text.

Today, editors of electronic editions and archives can transcend this limitation by supplementing texts with audio, video, and animation. This dissertation is itself supplemented by a digital "audiotext" or classroom edition of *Paradise Lost* Book Nine on which I am collaborating with Professor John Rumrich and others.[23] Noting an increase in marathon group readings of *Paradise Lost* that reassert the duality of the work as both a print text and an oral performance, Professor Rumrich and I decided to represent this duality in new media by integrating a digital audio recording of the poem with an electronic text. This pairing is informed by our own experiences teaching *Paradise Lost* as well as by cognitive research demonstrating that comprehension increases when students both read and hear a text. We see our project as an experiment in the future of the book informed by the history of the book. So defined, the project resists the archival impulse which now dominates scholarly electronic editing. Digital archives are backward looking—they seek to use digital technology to study print artifacts. To the extent that audio is included at all—it is authorial. *The Walt Whitman Archive*, for example, includes Whitman's own primitive recording from his poem

[23] The Book Nine audiotext prototype is the collaborative effort of Olin Bjork, John Rumrich, and Shea Suski. It was produced with grant and technical support from Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services at the University of Texas at Austin from 2005 to 2007. See Bjork and Rumrich, eds., *"Paradise Lost" Audiotexts*, http://www.laits.utexas.edu/miltonpl.

"America," but not Orson Welles's famous reading from *Song of Myself*.[24] In contrast, our project openly recreates and interprets the work for 21st century students.

As both a wellspring of the audiotext project and a meditation on its aims, this dissertation investigates the actual effects of print and digital supplements putatively designed to enhance comprehension or appreciation of the work. The first two chapters examine the rationale and influence of authorial and editorial matter added to early editions of the poem. The final two chapters explore the ways in which digital technology changes how scholars and readers interact with *Paradise Lost* and other works of literature. When discussing an unauthorized edition, I have found it necessary to distinguish between editorial and paratextual supplements. To signify both categories at once, I have adapted the term *interface* from media studies. An interface is a point or surface of interaction between two systems. When we approach an edition of *Paradise Lost*, we encounter multiple layers of interface. First, there is the physical layer imposed by the book itself. After we manipulate that interface, another presents itself—the editorial framework. When we finally reach the content, we find it has its own layer of interface. Each layer of interface above the first, therefore, mediates the underlying layer(s) as its content. The recursive nature of the interface concept is all the more apparent in the case of a Web site that displays a facsimile of a print edition. The user examines the text of this edition through as many as seven layers of interface: the hardware, operating system, browser, Web site, format, apparatus, and finally the paratext. In this scenario, however, the term "interface" refers by default to the Web site.

[24] Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price, eds., *The Walt Whitman Archive*, "Pictures and Sound" http://www.whitmanarchive.org/multimedia/index.html.

A Web site designer has little control over the computer, operating system, or browser a user will employ. By analogy, the interface that the editor of a print edition is most concerned with is the layer just below that of a book's typographic structure.

I foreground the distinction between the editorial and paratextual layers of an edition's interface in my first chapter, "'No Delay of Preface,'" which investigates why the first edition of *Paradise Lost* arrived in 1667 bearing no front matter other than a title page. Adopting Genette's approach and vocabulary, I demonstrate that the book does indeed carry a substantial paratext. Nonetheless, in 1668 the publisher inserted new preliminary material, including Milton's essay in defense of the verse. This supplement alters the work both materially and conceptually because it participates in a contemporary debate over the propriety of rhyme in drama and epic and thus provides the poem with a topical agenda in addition to its timeless one. After detailing the paratext that Milton left us when he died in 1674, I call attention to the supplements that fall outside this category but are present in the majority of posthumous editions.

In my next chapter, "The Heresy of Argument," I examine the prose summaries or "Arguments" that appear in most editions of *Paradise Lost* after 1667 and all editions of *Samson Agonistes*. A common feature in Renaissance texts, Arguments embody three assumptions about poems regarded as heresies by post-Romantic critics: that their meaning can be restated in other forms, that their function is didactic, and that their method is rhetorical. Milton's Arguments, therefore, tend to be subordinated by modern critics, particularly those who interpret his poems as sites of contestation and indeterminacy offering no final resolution. The Arguments attest to the polemical nature

of Milton's intellectual milieu and thus to the anachronism of accounts that paint him as a proto-postmodern relativist. In a culture where formal logic and rhetoric still dominated university curricula, a prose Argument was viewed as an encapsulation of the logical structure of a text. A verse Argument, on the other hand, was regarded primarily as a mnemonic device. This chapter addresses a dearth of scholarship on Arguments in the field of bibliography and textual studies and demonstrates that Milton's Arguments bolster his theodicies and engage in some of the controversies surrounding his poems.

In Chapter Three, "From Apparatus to Archive," I begin by discussing how editors have exploited the margins to annotate and emend the text of *Paradise Lost*. As supplements, explanatory and critical apparatuses make different statements about a work. The former represents it as a stable axis around which a variety of interpretations revolve. The latter, meanwhile, verifies the soundness of a critical edition's text while calling into question the possibility of determining the work. In the 1980s, critics such as McGann and D. F. McKenzie advocated a "social theory" of textuality that figures the material work as the totality of its manuscripts and editions, each a cultural product worthy of study. But due to the sheer volume of materials necessary to represent the evolution of a given work, they failed to put forward a practicable model for social-text editing. With the advent of the World Wide Web, McGann predicted that the electronic "critical archive" would render the print critical edition obsolete.[25] A "critical archive" combines an apparatus of textual and explanatory notes with facsimiles and transcripts of multiple versions. An interdisciplinary movement called the Digital Humanities now

[25] "The Rationale of Hypertext," *Text* 9 (1996): 11-32.

sponsors the creation of such archives. Furthermore, a standards organization called the Text Encoding Initiative Consortium urges that editors "mark up" every transcript so as to return sophisticated results to a scholar using a search engine. I relate this state of affairs to the dominance of Richard Bentley's conjectural approach in the early seventeenth century and of Fredson Bowers's copy-text approach in the 1960s and 70s.

Chapter Four, "Reinventing the Classroom Edition," traces the genesis and development of the audiotext project and contrast its goals with those of electronic archives. The current emphasis on archiving and text encoding in the Digital Humanities, combined with a theoretical opposition to eclecticism and modernization among social-text critics, has stunted the development of digital classroom editions that serve the needs of students and teachers rather than textual scholars. The audiotext's interface offers multiple viewing modes, enabling the user to display the modernized reading text alone or in parallel with annotations and other supplements, such as a transcript of the original text. Unlike prior editions and archives, therefore, it accommodates both immersive and analytical reading modes. And it does so while reproducing the facing-page layout of a printed book. It thus sets forth a new model for the electronic edition: not a Web site adapted to the purpose, but rather a digital codex that maintains the strengths of print technology while rejecting its limitations. The primary rationale for the project, however, is to realize the untapped potential of the aural in electronic textual editing.

I conclude the dissertation by advocating the production of social-text variorums rather than editions or archives. These variorums would showcase the evolving nature of literary works of art and serve as platforms for users to create their own editions.

Chapter 1: "No Delay of Preface"

In the fall of 1667, *Paradise Lost* appeared before the English reading public in the raw, or nearly so, with only the fig leaf of a title page fronting the first line of the poem.[1] Less than 30 years later, John Milton's epic was the most elaborately dressed poem in English history. The author himself played an active role in this makeover, supplying a preface on the verse and a prose Argument (or summary) for each book in 1668. He may also have solicited the frontispiece and commendatory poems for the second edition of 1674. But after Milton's death, the poem was lavished with more extensive accoutrements. The publisher Jacob Tonson "adorn'd" the 1688 fourth edition with "sculptures" (i.e., engraved illustrations), one for each book, which he had procured from several sources. To *The Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton* (1695), he appended Patrick Humes's 321-page "Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost" (roughly the length of the poem itself). No English poet had yet received so lengthy a commentary.[2]

Two questions emerge from this brief history: why was the work published so (im)modestly in 1667 and why was it so quickly and heavily supplemented? The first question appears all the more puzzling given that Milton did not rush the work to press. Thomas Ellwood attests that Milton gave him a draft of the poem in August of 1665.[3] If

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[1] There is also a blank leaf conjugate with the title-leaf, which has the title page on the verso. Together they form a half-sheet, the other half bearing the last four pages of the text.

[2] See Ants Oras, *Milton's Editors and Commentators from Patrick Hume to Henry John Todd* (New York: Haskell House, 1964), 5-8.

[3] See *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*, ed. Joseph Wyeth (London, 1714), 233. Milton may have continued to revise the epic after this date, of course, but Ellwood implies otherwise.

Ellwood can be trusted on this point, Milton and his agents had two or more years to compose and acquire preliminary material.[4] At minimum, any Renaissance book lengthier than a pamphlet was expected to include a preface. Prior to the chartering of the Stationer's Company in 1557, the standard form of preface was a dedicatory epistle, which served the dual function of introducing a work and gratifying or soliciting a patron, usually an aristocrat.[5] With the rise of a printing trade in the Elizabethan period, however, books began to incorporate both dedicatory and prefatory epistles, the latter addressed "to the reader."[6] By the dawn of the civil war era, a sense among authors and booksellers that readers were their true patrons, combined with an increase in republican and anti-aristocratic sentiments in society more generally, rendered the dedicatory epistle optional (and for an author of Milton's convictions, unthinkable). For his 1645 *Poems*, Milton supplied neither a preface nor a dedication; rather, the publisher Humphrey Moseley composed a short letter, "The Stationer to The Reader." With or without this preface, which announces "as true a birth as the muses have brought forth since our famous Spenser wrote" (a4r), bookshop customers would have recognized the book as a prodigy volume after a minute's perusal.[7] Potential buyers inspecting *Paradise Lost* might have felt the want of a preface, however, for predecessors in the genre were few.

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[4] They may have had five years, for Milton's nephew Edward Phillips recalled that the poem was finished about three years after the King's Restoration in 1660. See Aubrey, "John Milton," 2:69.

[5] On such epistles, see H. S. Bennett, *English Books & Readers, 1475-1557*, 2nd. ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 40-53.

[6] On this transition, see Arthur F. Marotti, "Patronage, Poetry, and Print," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 1-26.

[7] See Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance* (London: Routledge), 204-227.

Clues that may help account for the absence of a preface can be found both inside and outside the covers of the book, in those accompanying discourses that Gérard Genette terms *le paratexte de l'œuvre* ("the paratext of the work").[8] This periphery of the text, "always the conveyer of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author,"[9] consists of *peritext*—including "the title or the preface and sometimes elements inserted into the interstices of the text, such as chapter titles or certain notes"—and *epitext*: "all those messages that, at least originally, are located outside the book, generally with the help of the media (interviews, conversations) or under cover of private communications (letters, diaries, and others)."[10] In addition to this spatial dimension, a paratextual element or message maintains a temporal relation to the text. With respect to the date of the work's original publication, a message's delivery time can be classified as prior, original, later, delayed, or posthumous.[11] Genette gauges the "illocutionary force" of a message, or the influence it exerts on the reader, in light of the sender's "situation of communication."[12] This method allows him to speculate on the function of each element. In the next section, I will adopt the rudiments of Genette's approach and some of his vocabulary in my analysis of the first and second editions of *Paradise Lost*.

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[8] *Seuils* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987), 7. Translated by Jane Lewin as *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[9] Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.

[10] Ibid., 5. Also included in the category of the peritext are such material factors as paper and typeface. But since these factors are not Genette's primary interest and have been well treated elsewhere, in critical parlance the term *paratext* is now understood as referring to a class of linguistic phenomena, and so I will treat it in this chapter.

[11] Ibid., 5-6.

[12] Ibid., 10, 8.

THE PARATEXT OF *PARADISE LOST*

The most conspicuous messages of the work's original peritext are those on the title page of the first issue (Figure 1).[13] The title (Paradise lost.) and subtitle (A / POEM / Written in / TEN BOOKS / By *JOHN MILTON*.) are curiously brief and nondescript for this era of print culture, failing to perform the basic function of specifying subject matter or genre. Then as now, the noun *paradise* had any number of referents, both secular and divine. In combination with the past participle *lost,* however, the title invites a comparison to Tasso's epic *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581). Yet most readers would have been familiar with that work as *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, the title of Fairfax's translation (1600). The phrase "a poem written in ten books," meanwhile, invokes neither the precedent of William D'Avenant nor of Abraham Cowley, who had described their own abortive yet well-known epics as "heroic" and "sacred" respectively. Such modifiers would have been necessary to signal the work's genre, for of previous epics only Lucan's *Pharsalia* and Camoen's *Os Lusíadas* (1572) were in ten books.[14] In early 1668, the first

[13] A variant of the 1667 title page exists, with the author's name in small italics. All in all, there are seven title-page variants, dated 1667, 1668, or 1669. Early textual critics assumed that each title-page variant was part of a different impression. But in 1941, James H. Pershing conclusively demonstrated that any textual variant could be found with two or more title-page variants, thus proving that there had only been one impression of the text. Rather than different editions, therefore, the title-page variants signal different issues. The first issue of an edition consists of those copies composed entirely from the initial impression. Subsequent issues contain variants printed after the initial publication, usually when a new batch of copies is to be bound and sent to the bookstore. Pershing argues that the 1667 title page with small italics results from a stop-press alteration and thus belongs to the same issue as the other 1667 title page. See "The Different States of the First Edition of *Paradise Lost*," *The Library* ser. 4, vol. 22, no. 1 (1941): 34-66.

[14] For the formats of other epics, see Barbara K. Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 448. See also Joseph Wittreich, "'A Poet among Poets': Milton and the Tradition of Prophecy" in *Milton and the Line of Vision*, ed. Joseph Wittreich (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 132.

edition of PL was reissued with a new title page (Figure 2) and an even more elusive subtitle (A / POEM / IN / TEN BOOKS / The Author *J. M.*).[15] David Masson speculates that the printer, attributing slow sales to Milton's reputation as a defender of divorce and regicide, decided to obscure his identity by replacing his full name with his initials.[16] Milton's notoriety might also help explain why the imprints (LONDON / Printed, and are […]) of the first and second issues identify neither the printer nor the publisher. These omissions violate a provision of the 1662 statute regulating the book trade: "every person and persons that shall hereafter print or cause to be printed any Booke Ballad Chart Pourtracture or any other thing or things whatsoever shall thereunto or thereon print and set his or theire owne Name or Names."[17] This requirement was often ignored, however, particularly in the case of unlicensed books.[18] Preempting suspicions of irregularity,

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[15] A variant of this title page exists with a period after BOOKS. The omission of "Written…By" was probably an economical revision. But perhaps Simmons came to realize that the phrase is imprecise, since Milton did not write a single word of the poem in his own hand.

[16] *The Life of John Milton: Narrated in Connexion with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of His Time* (London and Cambridge, UK: Macmillan and Co., 1859-94), 6:623. Hugh Amory contends rather that, despite its 1668 date, this is actually the first title page. Simmons, Amory explains, lost his nerve and substituted it for the 1667 title page(s), which he then used later as his confidence grew. See "Things Unattempted Yet," *The Book Collector* 32.1 (Spring 1983): 50-51. Stephen B. Dobranski rejects both explanations and speculates that the initials are merely "a compositor's preference, a decision based in part, if not exclusively, on the changing availability of italic, upper-case type." See *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 38.

[17] John Raithby, ed., "Charles II, 1662: An Act for preventing the frequent Abuses in printing seditious treasonable and unlicensed Bookes and Pamphlets and for regulating of Printing and Printing Presses," in vol. 5 of *Statutes of the Realm: 1628-80*, ed. Raithby et al. (London: G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1819), 428-35, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp?compid=47336.

[18] Roughly half, or 54%, of imprints dated 1668, for example, do not carry a printer's name. See D. F. McKenzie, "The London Book Trade in 1668," in *Making Meaning: "Printers of the Mind" and Other Essays*, ed. Peter D. McDonald and Michael F. Suarez (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 115.

directly above the imprints a message (Licensed and Entred according / to Order.) attests that the work has indeed been licensed and registered as specified by the statute.

To identify the printer and publisher as Samuel Simmons, we must turn outside the pages of the first edition, to the work's prior epitext. A manuscript survives of Book One only, prepared by a scribe and corrected by as many as five hands.[19] Neither Milton nor Simmons's name appears on the manuscript, but on the verso of the front outside leaf is the undated Imprimatur of "Tho. Tomkyns" (Thomas Tomkins), chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury.[20] A publishing contract "made the 27th day of Aprill 1667 Betweene John Milton gent of thone partie and Samuel Symons Printer of thother partie" describes the work as "now lately Licenced to be printed."[21] In the Stationer's Register, an entry dated August 20, 1667 grants the copyright for "Paradice lost" to "M^{r} Sam: Symons" under the authority of Tomkins and Richard Royston, Under Warden of the Stationer's Company.[22] The entry gives Milton's name as "I. M.," leading Hugh Amory to speculate that Simmons sought to conceal the author's identity from Company officials by registering a copy with the initialed title page.[23]

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[19] For a facsimile and transcript, see Helen Darbishire, ed., *The Manuscript of Milton's "Paradise Lost" Book I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931).

[20] Underneath the imprimatur are the signatures of Richard Royston and George Tokefield, two members of the Stationer's Company. For a photograph of the license, see ibid., xii. For a transcript, see W. W. Greg's "Review" of the second volume of Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, in *The Modern Language Review* 42, no. 1 (January 1947): 134.

[21] This may be the earliest surviving contract between an author and a printer. For a reproduction and transcript, see Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 2:112-13.

[22] For a transcript of the entry in Register F, page 337, see Greg, "Review," 42:1:134.

[23] "Things Unattempted Yet," 74-75.

Simmons had little to fear from the authorities—the work had indeed been "licensed and entered according to order."[24] He seems rather to have feared the *public* association of his name with Milton's. London in 1667 was recovering from the plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of September 1666. As is often the case with the aftermaths of such disasters, even in modern western cities, lawlessness and retribution abounded. Although his family's bookstore and printing shop were among the fortunate few that survived the fire, Simmons's name appears in surprisingly few imprints dated from the end of his apprenticeship in 1662 to his retirement in 1678.[25] Either Simmons was unsuccessful as a printer, or he was doing a great deal of anonymous printing.[26] His father Matthew,[27] who died in 1654, had a reputation for printing and selling radical literature, including Milton's most controversial pamphlets.[28] Perhaps Simmons carried on the tradition while keeping a lower profile, and Milton sought him out as the printer of

[24] This was the exception rather than the rule. Only 79 of nearly 500 items printed in 1668, are entered in the register. McKenzie reasons that "licensing could be safely neglected for non-controversial books […] and *had* to be evaded for controversial ones." See "The London Book Trade in 1668," 118.

[25] Based on evidence from imprints alone, Simmons' yearly output was about a seventh of his father's. See Peter Lindenbaum, "The Poet and the Marketplace: Milton and Samuel Simmons," in *Of Poetry and Politics: New Essays on Milton and his World*, ed. P. G. Stanwood (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies), 252. Lindenbaum draws his figures from the appendix of D. F. McKenzie's unpublished Lyell lectures of 1988.

[26] Richard Bentley calls Simmons "a poor Bookseller" in the preface to his 1732 edition (a1v). In a letter preserved with the manuscript, however, J.[acob] T.[onson] replies that, on the contrary, "[Simmons] was lookt upon as an able & substantial printer." See Darbishire, ed., *The Manuscript of Milton's "Paradise Lost" Book I,* xii.

[27] According to the DNB, Matthew was not Samuel's uncle, as some Miltonists have supposed.

[28] The name of Matthew Simmons appears on the licensed works *The Judgement of Martin Bucer* (1644), *Articles of Peace* (1649), and *Eikonoklastes* (1649), and on the unlicensed *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643) and *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649).

choice for authors disenfranchised by the new regime.[29] Or perhaps both men had few options and theirs was a marriage of mutual desperation and obligation.

Whatever the state of his printing business, at the age of twenty-seven, *Paradise Lost* became Simmons's first official publishing venture.[30] He made arrangements with three booksellers in 1667 and three more in 1668-1669. William Riley Parker considers six booksellers "a rather large number for a book of poetry which had yet to find an audience, especially since Simmons himself was a bookseller as well as a printer."[31] There are at least two good reasons, however, why Simmons might not have sold the first two issues in his own shop. First, contractual obligations with the other booksellers might have prevented him. Second, since these booksellers are advertised in the otherwise anonymous imprints (to be sold by *Peter Parker* / under *Creed* Church neer *Aldgate*; And by / *Robert Boulter* at the *Turks Head* in *Bishopsgate Street*; / And *Matthias Walker*, under St. *Dunstons* Church / in *Fleet-Street*, […]), by stocking the book Simmons would have provided a clue to the identity of its printer.

Together, the title-page messages bespeak Simmons's inexperience as a marketer and insecurity as a publisher. Only the title itself has authority in the manuscript, which lacks a title page but superscripts "Paradise lost" on the versos. It is doubtful that Milton contributed anything further. According to Ronald B. McKerrow, a seventeenth-century

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[29] Simmons was called to answer for printing "seditious books" in 1664, 1667, 1668, and 1670. See Great Britain Public Record Office, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic series, of the Reign of Charles II: 1660-1685* (London, 1947).

[30] See Lindenbaum, "Milton and Samuel Simmons," 254.

[31] *Milton: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 2:602.

title page should be regarded "not as part of the work to which it is prefixed, or as the production of its author, but rather as an explanatory label affixed to the book by the printer or publisher."[32] Although Simmons's "explanatory label" fails to adequately describe the contents of the book, it does explain why he opted not to provide the missing preface himself. Not only would it have been incongruous for Simmons to set forth an epistle in the manner of Moseley's personable "the Stationer to the Reader" while maintaining his anonymity, he was simply not up to the task of writing such an epistle, let alone a preface "answerable" to Milton's epic.

Perhaps Milton himself disrelished the notion of writing a preface that would amount to a manifesto on heroic poetry. With the exception of his *Grammar* and *Logic*, which he probably needed as textbooks for his students, Milton's *oeuvre* suggests that he preferred to theorize by example. His letters and asides show that he was assessing and developing theories of oratory, history, and poetry, but instead of treatises on those arts he left us with polemics, histories, and poems. For the most part, therefore, scholars must extrapolate Milton's views on poetics during the years he was composing *Paradise Lost* from the poem itself. His most extensive commentary on the subject—a digression in *The Reason of Church-Government* (1642)—was by then two decades old (*YP* 1:810-17). As of that writing, Milton had yet to settle on a genre or topic on which to concentrate his efforts. Two years later, in *Of Education* (1644), he references "that sublime art which in *Aristotle's poetics*, in *Horace*, and the *Italian* commentaries of *Castelvetro*, *Tasso*, *Mazzoni*, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true *Epic* poem, what of a *Dramatic*,

[32] McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 91.

what of a *Lyric*, what decorum is, which is the grand master peece to observe" (*YP* 2:404-05). Milton neglects to mention that generic laws and decorum were topics of contention for Castelvetro, Tasso, and Mazzoni. It appears, therefore, that he was still arbitrating among the sixteenth-century Italians.

When discussion of the prospects for an English epic broke out among his exiled countrymen in 1650, the extent to which Milton took notice remains unclear. At Paris, D'Avenant published *The Preface to Gondibert, An Heroick Poem,* in the form of a letter to Thomas Hobbes. The same pamphlet contains another letter, "The Answer of Mr. Hobbes," and commendatory poems by Cowley and Edmund Waller, two courtier poets published by Moseley before he produced Milton's *Poems*. D'Avenant, the poet laureate of England, expresses an ambition to surpass the ancients—an ambition Hobbes predicts he will achieve provided that the English language perseveres. Yet the pamphlet appeared a year before the first edition of *Gondibert*, which itself delivered only three of the five books promised in *The Preface*.[33] If publishing the pamphlet before the poem was a shrewd advertising strategy on the part of D'Avenant, the price was ridicule from his royalist peers. In a parodic eulogy, one wag asked, "A Preface to no Book, a Porch to no house; / Here is the Mountain, but where is the Mouse?"[34]

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[33] D'Avenant planned to finish the poem in the American colonies, where he was to have an appointment on behalf of Charles II. But he was captured at sea by the Commonwealth in 1650, imprisoned, and sentenced for treason. According to Milton's anonymous biographer, as well as Anthony Wood, Jacob Tonson, and Jonathan Richardson, Milton played a role in his release from the Tower of London in 1652 (or perhaps in 1654, when he was jailed for debt). Richardson adds that D'Avenant later interceded on Milton's behalf at the Restoration. See Darbishire, ed., *Early Lives of Milton*, 30, 338, 272. Upon regaining his freedom, D'Avenant abandoned the project.

[34] "Upon the *Preface*," in *Certain Verses Written By Severall of the Author's Friends; to be Re-printed with the Second Edition of Gondibert* (London, 1653), 4 (A2r).

Milton's poem without a preface engendered similar puzzlement in Andrew Marvell. The subject matter of Milton's "slender Book," Marvell writes in his 1674 commendatory poem, "Held me a while misdoubting his Intent, / That he would ruine (for I saw him strong) / The sacred Truths to Fable and old Song" (2, 6-8).[35] Marvell was aware that Tasso, among others, had warned against the poetic adaptation of scriptural histories, reasoning that the wondrous invention separating poetry from history would cast the aura of fable over the "sacred Truths."[36] Unlike Cowley, who attempts to justify the use of biblical subject matter in his preface to *Poems* (1656), Milton proceeds as if no prohibition had ever been put forward.[37] Yet Marvell confesses that "as I read, soon growing less severe, / I lik'd his project" (11-12). Undoubtedly, what swayed Marvell was not merely Milton's tactful integration of Christianity and mythology, but also his meta-commentary in the passages that begin Books One (lines 1-49), Three (1-55), Seven (1-50), and Eight (1-47). According to Genette, such passages not only serve prefatorial functions, they exemplify a form of preface that was the standard prior to the Gutenberg-age: *la préface intégrée* ("incorporated preface").[38]

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[35] The poem is printed on a preliminary leaf (signature A3r-v) of the second edition (1674).

[36] Torquato Tasso, *Discourses on the Heroic Poem*, ed. Mariella Cavalchini and Irene Samuel (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 39-40.

[37] Cowley states that his incomplete *Davideis*, *a Sacred Poem of the Troubles of David,* falls short of his vision of a divine epic: "sure I am, that there is nothing yet in our *Language* (nor perhaps in *any*) that is in any degree answerable to the *Idea* that I conceive of it. And I shall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it throughly and successfully" (b3v). Cowley's example may have inspired Milton to convert *Paradise Lost* from a drama to an epic, albeit in blank verse rather than heroic couplets.

[38] Genette, *Seuils*, 152 (*Paratexts*, 164).

In his four incorporated prefaces, Milton speaks *in propria persona*, or more accurately *in persona auctoris*, rather than in the impersonal voice of the narrator (or muse). This mode of discourse is consistent with the exordiums of orations, not with the openings of epics. As in an exordium, the poet speaks of himself, the challenge before him, and the approach he plans to take. The exordium of Book Eight (now Book Nine) offers a comprehensive defense of the poetic principles informing the poem. Whereas in the other three exordiums, the poet addresses a muse, here he speaks to contemporaries who have formed their ideas of heroic poetry from examples of classical epics and modern romances. One might venture to propose, therefore, that this exordium fulfills the prefatorial function of the epistle to the reader, while the others function as dedicatory epistles appealing for divine patronage. The poet calls the "argument" or theme of the remaining books "not less but more heroic" than those of the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and the *Aenied* (14-19). His standard of comparison, the magnitude of the incensed party's retribution, is universal in the case of original sin and particular with regard to the peccadilloes of Hector, Ulysses and Aeneas. The subject of the last three books, therefore, beats the classical epics at their own game. Yet when the poet turns to modern epics and romances, he adopts a new criterion. His argument remains "higher" than those of other Christian poets because while they sing of "wars" (28-31) or "races and games" (33-38), he celebrates Christian virtues: "the better fortitude / Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom" (31-32).[39]

[39] Classical epic poets, of course, also sang of war and war games, but the details Milton rehearses suggest that he had later battles and tournaments in mind. As pagans, apparently, the ancients are not as blameworthy for deeming war the only heroic argument.

The presence of these incorporated prefaces goes a long way toward explaining the absence of epistolary prefaces. Not only would the latter steal the former's thunder, the exordiums afford Milton poetic license and rhetorical distance. Whereas D'Avenant impoliticly critiques his predecessors by name, Milton in the persona of the epic poet or *vates* obliquely denigrates authors he admired in his youth and middle age—such as Boiardo, Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser—for displaying "The skill of Artifice or Office mean, / Not that which justly gives Heroic name / To Person or to Poem" (39-41). Milton may have soured on chivalric romance in the 1660s, perhaps associating it with Restoration court culture. But critics should be wary of attributing the judgment of the *vates* to Milton, who in his prose works exhibits a tendency to let specific rhetorical exigencies shape his general pronouncements. Here he seeks to portray the office of the Christian poet as unoccupied, and thus privileges raw didacticism over refined artistry.

Whereas in *The Reason of Church-Government*, Milton describes his poesy as a God-given talent, the *vates* insists that his argument is "sufficient of it self" (43) to uplift the epic standard "If answerable style I can obtaine / Of my Celestial Patroness" (20-21). Tasso observes that the Christian poet, like the heathen poets of old, should request "divine aid for lofty utterance no less than for recollection of things buried in oblivion."[40] Yet the invocation serves as a poetic means of summoning the poet's inner knowledge and genius, Tasso warns, not an external spirit.[41] Disregarding Tasso's admonition, Milton's *vates* literalizes the convention, testifying that his muse "dictates to me

[40] *Discourses on the Heroic Poem*, 117.

[41] Ibid., 116.

slumb'ring, or inspires / Easie my unpremeditated Verse" (23-24). In the Book One invocation, he even dares to invoke the Holy Spirit directly. Tasso and other sixteenth-century poets thought it more pious to use the code-name "Urania," the muse of astronomy, as Milton does in the Book Seven invocation. Hobbes disapproved of both strategies: "why a Christian should thinke it an ornament to his Poeme; either to profane the true God, or invoke a false one, I can imagine no cause, but a reasonlesse imitation of custome; of a foolish custome; by which a man enabled to speake wisely from the principles of nature, and his own meditation, loves rather to be thought to speake by inspiration, like a Bagpipe."[42] This statement is consistent with his view that divine intervention in human affairs is unknowable, unnecessary, and therefore unsustainable.

Milton, on the other hand, subscribed to a providential view of history and professed in the *Second Defense* (1654) and elsewhere that God had not only called him to write but also enhanced his mental powers in his blindness. Yet he was savvy enough to know when, where, and how to elaborate on this theme. An epistolary preface to *Paradise Lost* in the contemporary vein would oblige him to say something of the occasion and circumstances of the poem's composition and thus land him in a no-win rhetorical situation. Should he endorse the poem's account of spiritual visitations and invite dismissal of the work as the product of a madman or a heretic? Or qualify that account and risk diminishing the mystical aura of the poem? Furthermore, Milton was probably uncertain of the extent to which God had assisted him. Even the *vates* expresses some doubt, predicting that his project will succeed "unless an age too late, or cold /

[42] "The Answer of Mr. Hobbes," in Sir William D'Avenant, *The Preface to Gondibert, An Heroick Poem*… (Paris: Matthieu Guillemot, 1650), 140-41.

Climat, or Years damp my intended wing / Deprest, and much they may, if all be mine, / Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear" (44-47). Here, as well as in two of the other exordiums, the *vates* speaks about his environment. Yet if we regard such passages as autobiographical, his portrayal, though sympathetic, is not forthright. In Book Seven, for example, he describes himself as "In darkness, and with dangers compast round, / And solitude; yet not alone, while thou / Visit'st my slumbers Nightly, or when Morn / Purples the East' (27-30). Scholars trace the composition of these lines to just before or after the Restoration, when Milton may have been subjected to dangers and solitude but was also "compast round" by a network of relatives and friends.

A few of these individuals later became Milton's biographers, and thanks to them we know something of his daily ritual during the seasons he chose to work on the poem. In the evening, one of his daughters or servants would read to him, and in the morning a student or visitor would serve as his amanuenses. If he was kept waiting, he would complain, saying he "wanted to bee milkd" of the "good Stock of Verses" he had formulated during the previous night.[43] If his nephew Edward Phillips happened to stop by, Milton would ask him to edit the growing manuscript.[44] Today, writers are expected to acknowledge such invaluable if inglorious assistance in their prefaces. No such

[43] Darbishire, ed., *Early Lives of Milton*, 33. This information comes from the anonymous "Life of Mr. John Milton," which was used as a source by Anthony Wood for his entry on Milton in *Fasti Oxonienses* (1691), but remained in manuscript among Wood's papers until it was rediscovered by Rev. Andrew Clark, LL.D., in 1889 and published as Edward S. Parsons, ed., "The Earliest Life of Milton," *The English Historical Review* 17, no. 65 (January 1902): 95-110. Darbishire identifies the anonymous biographer as Milton's nephew John Phillips (xvi-xix). Parker proposes Milton's student Cyriack Skinner (*Milton: A Biography*, 1:xiii-xv.)

[44] Edward Phillips, "The Life of Mr. John Milton," in *Letters of State, Written by John Milton*… (London: 1694), xxxvi.

expectation existed in Milton's time—authors were more likely, in fact, to thank aristocrats lacking prior knowledge of the work. Still, the omission appears glaring in the context of a narrative of the composition process. It becomes easier to forgive the incompleteness of Milton's autobiographical passages if we accept that they are intended to do more than give an impression of the author as an individual genius laboring in isolation. The passages characterize the poem as a song; they do not to account for its continued existence as a manuscript, let alone its social life as a book. They remain consistent, therefore, with the history of epic as an orally transmitted form as well as with passages from Milton's own prose works, wherein he implies that print can achieve the immediacy of speech.

If Milton's intimate circle accomplished the poem's journey from voice to manuscript, material agents of production over whom he could exert less control facilitated its transformation into a printed book. In his facsimile edition, Harris F. Fletcher confesses his dismay that "the compositor and the printer were responsible for much of the text as we have it."[45] Yet as we have seen, Simmons and company intervened only minimally in the work's original peritext. When we move on to the later peritext, however, we find them playing a larger role. A year or so after the work's initial publication, Simmons printed two sheets worth of front matter for the edition's third issue. Following a new title-page leaf, eleven pages are devoted to prose summaries of each of the ten books (THE ARGUMENT:), two pages to an essay on heroic prosody (THE VERSE.), and one to corrections (ERRATA.).

[45] *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 3:59.

From the evidence of surviving copies, Parker concludes that the third issue sold better than the two previous ones and that the 1669 fourth issue, also buttressed with the new preliminary material, sold better still.[46] Two clues suggest that Simmons, not Milton, instigated the supplementation of the first edition. On the title page (Figure 3), Simmons's name finally appears in the imprint while the precautionary phrase "licensed and entered according to order" disappears. Apparently, Simmons had grown confident or desperate enough to promote the book personally. On the first page of the Argument, a head-note entitled "*The Printer to the Reader*" and signed "*S. Simmons*" introduces the new preliminaries: "*Courteous Reader*, There was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, I have procur'd it, and withall a reason of that which stumbled many others, why the Poem Rimes not." By omitting this note from recent editions, Stephen B. Dobranski argues, "modern editors rob us of valuable information for understanding how the poem came into existence and reinforce the mistaken perception of Milton's autonomy. Simmons's note indicates, on the contrary, a collaborative relationship between him and Milton."[47] Yet Simmons himself first committed the crime of removing the note when he reprinted the preliminaries for the final issue of 1669. Furthermore, the note obfuscates as much as it clarifies his relationship with Milton. Most critics assume that Simmons requested and "procur'd" both the Argument and the essay from Milton. The collocation "and withall…" implies that the printer obtained the two items in one parcel. But a variant of this note, which

[46] *Milton: A Biography*, 2:1111.

[47] *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 35.

Fletcher deems an earlier state, makes no mention of Milton's defense of the verse.[48] The omission suggests that Simmons began printing the Argument before he was aware of the essay. If so, the likelihood increases that he (or an associate) wrote the Argument.

The case for Milton's authorship remains strong, however. By the terms of the publishing contract, Milton had a financial stake in the first edition's success—he was to be paid five pounds when 1,300 copies were sold.[49] Given this unusual arrangement,[50] which applied to three editions, Simmons probably prevailed on Milton to supply the Argument for free or at a bargain rate, just as he later convinced him to participate in the revision and augmentation of the second edition. Though seldom proffered, the prose Argument to Milton's drama *Samson Agonistes* constitutes the best evidence that Milton wrote the Argument to *Paradise Lost* (and vice-versa). The formal similarities suggest that one was composed in conscious imitation of the other, if not by the same hand. As far as we know, Milton was the only person involved in the publication of both works. [51] Moreover, an essay (*Of that Sort of Dramatic Poem which / is Call'd Tragedy*) also prefaces the drama. Troubling this comparison, however, is the fact that *Paradise*

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[48] *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 2:178.

[49] A receipt dated April 26, 1669 testifies that these monies were paid. Almost two years and at least five issues after the initial contract was signed, 1,300 or more copies had finally been sold. For a photograph of the receipt, see ibid., 2:210.

[50] Authors usually ceded perpetual rights to their books for a lump sum or complimentary copies, after which they received no money from sales. Sometimes they financed the book themselves or in partnership with a bookseller. See Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 22-24.

[51] The title-page imprint reports that *Paradise Regained—Samson Agonistes* was "Printed by J.M. for John Starkey." Starkey was a bookseller-publisher, while J.M. "was almost certainly John Macocke, who operated one of the largest printing houses in London at that time." Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 4:12.

Regained, published jointly with *Samson Agonistes* in 1671, lacks an Argument, essay, or any preliminaries other than a title page. But this aberration only strengthens the case, in that the printer or bookseller would hardly have supplied additional front matter for one work and not the other—*Paradise Regained* being the first and featured piece in the volume. The disparity in the presentation of the two works remains an unsolved (and largely unnoticed) mystery of Milton studies.

Peter Lindenbaum suspects that Simmons's decision to augment the first edition of *Paradise Lost* resulted from communications with the booksellers he had contracted with—and by extension, their customers. The third issue's imprint, Lindenbaum notes, lists the bookseller "H. Mortlack" (Henry Mortlock), who kept a stall under the sign of the White Hart at Westminster Hall. Mortlock was not only more prolific than the other booksellers of the first edition, he catered to a different audience: the well-heeled clientele surrounding the court.[52] If Simmons had ever really believed that Milton's incorporated prefaces effectively introduce the genre, purpose, and origin of the work, he must have determined that they would not be sufficient for these readers. Their tastes were, as a rule, less experimental, and they would have "desired" an explanation of the work's unusual form and content. But if Simmons's rationale for the new preliminaries amounted to a marketing ploy, Milton nonetheless made them serve purposes of his own. The prefatory essay to *Paradise Lost*, like that of *Samson Agonistes*, responds to the aesthetic theory of court dramatists. During the Commonwealth period, English refugees in France had taken to writing plays in heroic couplets, and after the Restoration they

[52] Lindenbaum, "Milton and Samuel Simmons," 250. See also Parker, *Milton: A Biography*, 2:602.

brought their new form to the London stage in an attempt to render traditional blank verse dramas obsolete. John Dryden became a practitioner and authored an essay *Of Dramatick Poesie* (1667), wherein his dialogic *raisonneur* questions strict adherence to classical or Elizabethan models and defends the use of rhyme in heroic and dramatic compositions. The *Essay* and the propagandizing poem *Annus Mirabilis* (1667) made Dryden a giant of Restoration culture and the unidentified object of Milton's contempt in his short essay defending the blank verse of *Paradise Lost* (Figures 4-5).

In addition to Dryden and other learned opponents, Milton's essay was occasioned by "vulgar readers" who were not only ignorant of the controversy over rhyme but also failed to recognize a poem in blank verse as a poem. These readers knew the classical epics, if at all, through John Ogilby's rhyming verse translations.[53] Glancing at Simmons's note, A. W. Verity grudgingly admits that "superfluous as it may seem to us that he should justify his adoption of blank verse—wherein his surpassing skill is the best of all justifications—we have cause to be grateful to the 'stumblings' of the unlettered which led him to write this preface, since it happily defines the qualities for which the metre of *Paradise Lost* is remarkable."[54] Verity's remark betrays the logic of the textual supplement. As a defense of the verse, the essay is "superfluous"; the verse justifies itself. Any defect, as Simmons and Milton insinuate, lies not in the lack of rhyme but in the readers and traditions of modernity. Yet the essay remains a useful

[53] The fifth edition of *The works of Publius Virgilius Maro Translated by John Ogilby* appeared in 1668. *Homer his Iliads Translated, Adorn'd with Sculpture, and Illustrated with Annotations by John Ogilby* debuted in 1660. *Homer, his Odysses Translated, Adorn'd with Sculpture, and Illustrated with Annotations by John Ogilby* premiered in 1665. All were published at London.

[54] Verity, ed., *Milton: Paradise Lost*, 2:lxiii-lxiv.

supplement because it contains a passage that "happily defines the qualities" of the verse that are not, apparently, self-evident: "apt Numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one Verse into another." Ironically, Verity makes this statement in a survey of the many and disputed interpretations of this passage. It seems that the supplement wants a supplement, and to be eked out by exegetes.

Although critics have scrutinized every word of the essay for historical and hermeneutical value, few have commented on the significance of its prefatorial location. Milton may have been the first to deploy an essay as a preface, a practice that Dryden later adopted. From its position in the front matter, the essay undermines in advance the *vates* claim that his muse "inspires / Easie my unpremeditated Verse" (9.23-24), figuring the poem as calculated and methodical. Unlike the exordiums, it discusses the epic in retrospective, as a completed entity. A degree of dishonesty is unavoidable, however, due to the fact that the preface, though written and printed last, comes before the text in the book. The word preface derives from *praefatio* ("saying beforehand"), which describes the first part of an oration in terms of its temporal relationship to the other parts. In a book, the added spatial dimension produces a terminological ambiguity. In those few instances where a preface appears before a text in time rather than in bookspace, its exceptionality rarely goes unremarked. Thus Hobbes slyly refers to D'Avenant's "Preface to *Gondibert*" as "the Preface Before *Gondibert*."[55]

The placement of Milton's essay predisposes readers to view his critique of rhyme as a motivating factor in the composition of the poem. His aspiration to "assert Eternal

[55] "The Answer of Mr. Hobbes," 129.

Providence, / And justifie the wayes of God to men" (1.25-26) now appears secondary—or at least subsequent—to his project of liberating heroic poetry "from the troublesom and modern bondage of rhyming." This is probably a misimpression: Edward Phillips testifies that the epic grew out of a blank verse tragedy that Milton was working on in the mid-1650s,[56] well before dramas in rhymed, end-stopped couplets became fashionable in England. When Milton transferred his theodicy, or defense of divine justice, to the epic genre, he sought to transcend the ancients and the early moderns—not rival British poets—as his incorporated prefaces make clear. Nonetheless, the prolepsis is hard to resist, even for someone who knows better. Marvell, for example, probably read the epic before the essay was written. Yet his 1674 commendatory poem registers and reinforces the essay's re-assignment of purpose. Whereas in the opening stanzas, Marvell describes the epic as a theodicy, in the last stanza he situates it within the literary rivalries of contemporary London. First, he envisions Milton's mindset during the composition of *Paradise Lost*: "Well mightst thou scorn thy readers to allure / With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure; / While the Town-Bayes writes all the while and spells, / And like a pack-horse tires without his bells" (45-48). The "Town-Bayes" is Dryden, who became poet laureate in 1668 and was mastering the art of the heroic couplet during the years in question. In the final lines of his poem, Marvell wittily acknowledges that he also is guilty of the sin Milton censures in his essay: "I too transported by the Mode offend, / And while I meant to Praise thee must Commend. / Thy Verse created like thy Theme sublime, / In Number, Weight, and Measure, needs not Rhime" (51-54).

[56] "The Life of Mr. John Milton," xxxv.

In addition to Marvell's commendatory poem, the delayed peritext introduced in the second edition consists of a Latin eulogy by S.[amuel] B.[arrow] and a frontispiece portrait of Milton signed "W.[illiam] Dolle sculpsit" after a print designed and engraved by William Faithorne in Milton's *History of Britain* (1670). These elements antique the work and commence a process of canonization that Jacob Tonson would complete. In the eulogy, Barrow focuses almost entirely on the action of Book Six, the war in heaven, and compares Milton favorably to Homer and Virgil. Thus Barrow responds to genre conventions as opposed to theological issues, and links Milton to the ancients rather than the moderns. Readers of the second edition, therefore, will find themselves oriented in different directions by the various exordiums and supplements, each of which figure the work differently, if not contradictorily. The fact that each form of preface registers an authentic aspect of the epic testifies to the diversity and power of the work.

On the second edition's title page (Figure 6), we find three significant changes to the messages on the first edition's title pages. The subtitle (A / POEM / IN / TWELVE BOOKS.) informs old readers of the new format, which implicitly affiliates the poem with Vergil's *Aeneid*. The imprint (*London*, Printed by *S. Simmons* next door to the / *Golden Lion* in *Aldersgate-street*, 1674.) implies that Simmons sold this edition, at least, at his own shop. Above the imprint, a message (The Second Edition [in black letter] / Revised and Augmented by the / Same Author) reassures the reader that any changes are authorial. This would be the last edition on which Simmons would collaborate with the author, for Milton died several months after it first appeared for sale.

PARATEXTUAL AUTHORITY

Although Genette stipulates that "something is not a paratext unless the author or one of his associates accepts responsibility for it,"[57] Milton's death did not close the book on the work's paratext, for a posthumous epitext surfaced. During the eighteenth century, several drafts of a tragedy called "Paradise Lost" or "Adam Unparadiz'd," written in Milton's own hand sometime between 1639 and 1652, gradually came to light as part of a collection bequeathed to Trinity College, Cambridge in 1691.[58] Milton probably never intended readers of his epic to see these private *avante-texts*, which figure the final product as the successor to any number of false starts. Nonetheless, modern editors occasionally reproduce or transcribe them as a supplement to their editions.[59] Similarly, editors sometimes append facsimiles or transcriptions of private or semi-private materials from the work's prior epitext, such as the publishing contract or pages from the Book One manuscript.[60] The ever-present possibility of supplementation necessitates a flexibility of terminology that Genette readily acknowledges. "The location of the epitext," he writes, "is anywhere outside the book – but of course nothing precludes its

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[57] Genette, *Paratexts*, 9.

[58] For the history of the manuscript as well as photographs of the drafts, see Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 2:12-17, 26-27.

[59] David Masson may have been the first editor to provide a transcript of the sketches in the introduction to volume two of the three volume *The Poetical Works of John Milton* (London, 1874), 2:17-18. Barbara Lewalski appends a diplomatic transcript to her recent edition, *John Milton: Paradise Lost* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 341-43.

[60] A transcript of the contract appears in an appendix to the first facsimile edition: R[ichard] H[erne] S[heperd], ed., *Paradise Lost in Ten Books The Text exactly reproduced from the first edition of 1667…* (London, 1873), 3A1v-3A2r. Darbishire reproduces pages from the manuscript in volume one of *The Poetical Works of John Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952-55).

later admission to the peritext."[61] Thus Genette allows editors of posthumous editions to direct paratextual traffic, but only in one direction—from the epitext to the peritext—and without adding to the congestion within the paratext as a whole.

In an earlier work, Genette envisioned a larger role for editors in the constitution of the paratext, which he then defined more democratically:

> a title, a subtitle, intertitles; prefaces, postfaces, notices, forewords, etc.; marginal, infrapaginal, terminal notes; epigraphs; illustrations; blurbs, book covers, dust jackets, and many other kinds of secondary signals, whether allographic or autographic. These provide the text with a (variable) setting and sometimes a commentary, official or not, which even the purists among readers, those least inclined to external erudition, cannot always disregard as easily as they would like and as they claim they do. I do not wish to embark here upon a study, still to come perhaps, of this range of relationships.[62]

When Genette embarked upon a study of the paratext several years later, he excluded from it "allographic" commentaries by those who are not agents of the author (e.g., posthumous editors and publishers) and included the category of the epitext. Whether he accounted for this redefinition epitextually (e.g., in an interview) at some point, I do not know, but he opts not to do so in the study's peritext and therefore I will plead the liberty of ignorance in speculating on his rationale. Genette faced a practical dilemma in writing a monograph on the subject because the "secondary signals" accompanying canonical

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[61] Genette, *Paratexts*, 344.

[62] Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 3.

works over the ages dwarf the primary texts themselves. Even limiting the focus to a novel like *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, therefore, would have entailed a book-length discussion of manifold editorial interventions. Genette envisioned *Seuils* not as a history of a single work but rather as a typological survey comprising the third part of his trilogy on transtextual relationships in western (particularly French) literature, following *Introduction* à *l'architexte* (1979) and *Palimpsestes* (1982). He may also have experienced philosophical reservations about the entailments of his original definition. If a literary work consists of a text and a paratext, and posthumous editors can build on the paratext, then the work itself is always under construction. Moreover, the bulk of a work gradually becomes non-authorial as its editors pile on their introductions and apparatuses. Genette's new definition regards a work as a set of textual and paratextual elements left behind by an author (and his associates) upon his death.

This redefinition, though pragmatic, weakens the correspondence between Genette's object of study and his theoretical model, which he describes as "a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*; a privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that – whether well or poorly understood and achieved – is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it."[63] Since this description also applies to non-authorized supplements, Genette lacks a warrant for his newfound conviction that only the author or an associate can admit elements into the paratext. The criterion does, however, serve to bring the paratext into greater parity with the text in a

[63] Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.

discipline that privileges authorially sanctioned meaning. In addition to practicality, then, intentionality operates tacitly as a delimiter of the paratext. But this second rationale calls into question the paratextual status of items that conflict with an author's purpose but are contributed by an associate. The foreword to Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (1543) provides a famous example. The aging Copernicus entrusted the book's publication to a young professor of astronomy, George Joachim Rheticus, who passed the manuscript off to the Lutheran theologian Andreas Osiander in Nuremberg. Osiander was an acquaintance of Copernicus and a supporter of his heliocentric theory, but he was concerned about a potential backlash from literalistic interpreters of scripture. To pre-empt controversy, he added an anonymous foreword characterizing the book's sun-centered system as a model for making astronomical predictions rather than a representation of the actual cosmos. When the work was published in 1543, Copernicus was on his deathbed and probably remained ignorant of Osiander's interference with his plan to overturn the Ptolemaic universe. Though the foreword was seldom construed as written by Copernicus himself, it nonetheless reduced the impact of his "hypothesis."[64]

These and other lingering definitional issues enliven rather than diminish Genette's book, which has licensed and encouraged scholars to study the functions of the liminal discursive structures found in authorial editions and archives. Although it has also proved valuable to scholars interested in studying how posthumous editors have deployed similar structures to influence a work's reception, these scholars should remember that the term "paratext" does not technically apply to such cases.

[64] On the publication of *De Revolutionibus*, see Owen Chadwick, *The Early Reformation on the Continent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 422-24.

FROM PARATEXT TO INTERFACE

In most scholarly editions, the text is mediated by an apparatus of notes that Genette situates on the "fringe of the paratext."[65] The necessity of conceiving of an apparatus as a zone outside the zone of the paratext makes the concept of *interface* useful for the study of print editions as well as electronic ones. In a print edition, the editor adds a fresh layer of interface upon a pre-existing layer of interface drawn from the paratext of the work. While it often requires a scholar to determine whether an interfacial element, such as a preface, belongs to the editorial or authorial layer, any reader can ascertain that the element is not, strictly speaking, part of the text. From the standpoint of an edition's readers, therefore, the interface consists of all the layered elements of mediation between themselves and the text proper. Understood in this sense, the term "interface" resurrects Genette's original conception of the paratext and deploys it in the context of an edition of a work rather than the work itself. By federating an edition's back matter, front matter, interstitial matter, and apparatus—both editorial and authorial—the term also fills a gap in bibliographical terminology.

In particular, the concept of interface can aid scholars studying the transmission and reception of canonical works such as *Paradise Lost*. From the eighteenth-century on, a variety of unauthorized supplements have surrounded the peritext composed by Milton and Simmons. Thomas Newton's edition of 1749 contains, in addition to an apparatus of variorum footnotes, 249 pages of non-paratextual material: a dedication, preface, life, critique, list of subscribers, advertisement, illustrations, and thematic and verbal indexes.

[65] Ibid., 337.

Such supplements constitute a threshold of interpretation vying with the paratext for influence. Still another threshold, often exerting the strongest influence of all, is that of Milton's prose works. For many early readers, *Eikonoklastes* (1649) and *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643) would have loomed large as they turned to *Paradise Lost*. As literary works in their own right, constituted by their own texts and paratexts, these works cannot be considered paratextual elements of *Paradise Lost* (or vice versa), for Genette stipulates that "the paratextual element is always subordinate to 'its' text."[66] Similarly, when they join the epic in a collection or anthology, they do not explicitly reside on the editorial layer of interface between the reader and the text of *Paradise Lost*. Their status becomes murkier, however, when they are included, in whole or in part, as a supplement to an edition of the poem. The Norton Critical Editions of *Paradise Lost*, for example, contain selections from Milton's prose works. The editors represent the selections—and by extension the works from which they derive—as lenses through which to view the poem. If we apply to them the litmus test of subordination, therefore, they would appear to be interfacial elements of these editions.

Occasionally editors or publishers present a work, at its inception, as subsidiary to another work. Such is the case with *Samson Agonistes*, published in the same 1671 volume as *Paradise Regained*. On the main title page (Figure 7) a message (To which is added / SAMSON AGONISTES.) situates the former, literally, as a supplement to the latter. *Paradise Regained*, the sequel to a work of some notoriety, naturally received top billing from the bookseller. For three hundred years, however, scholars neglected to

[66] Genette, *Paratexts*, 12.

consider why the two poems were published jointly in the first place. The oversight can be partially explained by the fact that, since the eighteenth century, publishers have tended to separate them or combine them with Milton's other poetical works. In 1971, a lecture series commemorating the tercentenary of *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* provided an occasion for Balachandra Rajan to scrutinize their original material circumstances with modern eyes.[67] Rajan concluded that Milton himself opted to juxtapose the two poems so as to contrast a perfect hero with a fallible one.[68] In subsequent monographs, Mary Ann Radzinowicz, John T. Shawcross, and Joseph A. Wittreich concurred with Rajan's assessment that the pairing was authorial. According to all four critics, the works were published as companion pieces because their genres, modes, themes, and/or characters interrelate, either through similarity or opposition.[69]

This line of reasoning, which has arguably been adopted by the majority of today's Miltonists, strikes me as problematic for several reasons. First, the observation that two works by the same author and from the same period complement each other in some fashion can hardly be considered unexpected or probative. Second, whenever a comparison (e.g., Samson as a type of Christ) seems to yield the same conclusion as a contrast (e.g., Samson as an antitype of Christ), circumspection is in order. Third, the

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[67] The lecture series took place at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, 1971.

[68] "To Which is Added *Samson Agonistes*—" in *The Prison and the Pinnacle: Papers to Commemorate the Tercentenary of "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes," 1671-1971*, ed. Balachandra Rajan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 82-110.

[69] Radzinowicz, *Toward "Samson Agonistes": The Growth of Milton's Mind* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 227-60; Shawcross, "*Paradise Regained": Worthy T'Have Not Remain'd So Long Unsung* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1988), 102-15; Wittreich, *Interpreting "Samson Agonistes"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 329-85.

physical evidence of the double book itself forces even Shawcross to admit that "the addition of *Samson Agonistes* to the 1671 volume could have been a publisher's strategy, increasing an otherwise 166-page volume to 220 pages."[70] Finally, the reception history of *Paradise Regained* demonstrates that eighteenth-century critics, many of whom were aware that the poem came into the world with *Samson Agonistes*, read it almost exclusively as a companion piece to *Paradise Lost*.[71]

Modern critics, familiar with a publishing industry that packages content according to less arbitrary criteria, may actually be generating the rationales that they attribute to the originators of the double book. If so, then Dobranski has less reason to lament the fact that "modern editions of Milton's works often obscure the poems' material conditions of authorship."[72] Yet even in the midst of an anthology, the poems speak to one other. And when one is fortunate enough to read them in the first edition, their dialogue becomes amplified. In order to discuss such effects without making the claim that Milton engineered them, Dobranksi argues that the edition itself "encourages readers to experience the two works as a unified structure."[73] This type of formulation, which credits paper and ink with a quasi-human intentionality, is an increasingly

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[70] John T. Shawcross, "The Genres of *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes*: The Wisdom of their Joint Publication," in *Milton Studies* 17 (1983): 226.

[71] See *Milton's "Paradise Regained": Two Eighteenth Century Critiques by Richard Meadowcourt and Charles Dunster*, ed. Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. (Gainesville, FL: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1971).

[72] "Text and Context for *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes*," in *Altering Eyes*: *New Perspectives on* "*Samson Agonistes*," ed. Mark R. Kelley and Joseph Wittreich (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2002), 30-31.

[73] Ibid., 31.

common reaction in textual studies to the theoretical "death of the author." Peter L. Shillingsburg resists this trend, insisting that "texts have neither intention nor meaning. Only people have them. Authors had them; compositors and readers have them; texts, however, are inert until acted upon by sentient agents. To posit a disembodied intention or meaning inhering in a text independent of human agency is mere obfuscation."[74] For Shillingsburg, each act of writing, composition, and reading a text is a separate "script act." Only certain shared conventions ensure that the meanings communicated in these script acts will converge around the meaning that the author intended.[75]

Shillingsburg's emphasis on the individual reader's role in the construction of meaning challenges Genette's proposition that a paratextual element *has* one or more functions. Those who understand the word "function" in its weakest sense, as a synonym for purpose, may find it relatively easy to assent to this proposition. Yet Genette often utilizes the word in a mechanistic sense, as if the paratext operates on readers and produces responses that are predictable and uniform. To a certain extent, this usage is licensed by Genette's description of his study as synchronic rather than diachronic. Genette seeks to separate heterogeneous verbal phenomena into functional types, not to trace their historical development.[76] He interprets each paratextual message in its original context, as if it were addressed from a particular author or publisher to a particular audience. This approach chooses to ignore the after-life of an element, during

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[74] Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 57.

[75] Ibid., 40-79.

[76] Genette, *Paratexts*, 13-14.

which it often finds readers who are not scholarly enough to know its original context but must still interpret its message and assign it a function. This function may or may not align with the author's intent or the interpretation of his or her contemporaries.

In the first section of this chapter, I followed Genette's example by equating "readers" with Milton's contemporary audience. Limiting the scope of history to the original context of publication licensed me to construe the effects of the various prefaces on these readers as consistent with the purposes of those who wrote them. Yet I was still forced to equivocate on the functions of the prefaces, because those readers who knew something of ancient and early modern debates on heroic poetry would have received them differently than those who did not. Moreover, in the case of the essay on the verse, the apologetic function that both groups of readers would have perceived as its primary motivation has now ceded pride of place to an overlapping purpose, that of explaining the poetic features that produce "true musical delight." In the next chapter, I will endeavor to prove that early readers also understood the functions of the Arguments to *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* differently than do modern readers, and that present-day Miltonists have either mistaken or ignored the original purposes of these summaries.

Chapter 2: The Heresy of Argument

> devl kikd outa hevn coz jelus of jesus&strts war.
> pd'off wiv god so corupts man(md by god) wiv apel.
> devl stays serpnt 4hole life&man ruind. Woe un2mnkind.

Rather than a poor E.E. Cummings imitation, the lines above constitute a text message summary of *Paradise Lost* transmitted by Dot Mobile, a wireless company, to its student subscribers.[1] In consultation with John Sutherland, Professor Emeritus of English Literature at University College London, the company condenses literary classics for reading on mobile phones and other handheld devices. Sutherland maintains that

> Texting, in the hands (or, more precisely, the thumbs) of a proficient user can not merely archive vast stores of material, it can boil that material down to its most manageable base elements. You could shrink the whole five-act text of Hamlet into a few thousand characters. And those few thousand characters could serve as an 'aide memoire,' enabling you to back translate into the golden syllables of the original.[2]

Most literary critics, however, would find it difficult to translate the messages from street-techie shorthand to standard English, much less to recognize in them the "base elements" of the originals.

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[1] The company's November 2005 press release provides a translation: "The devil is kicked out of heaven because he is jealous of Jesus and starts a war. He is angry with God and so corrupts man (who is made by God) with an apple. The devil remains as a serpent for the whole of his life and man is ruined. Woe unto mankind." http://www.dotmobile.co.uk/about/pressaboutus.php.

[2] Ibid. At present, text-messages are usually confined to 160 characters, the size limit of the Short Message Service (SMS) available on most mobile phones and hand-held computers. Though full-length e-books are also available for these devices, they are not delivered via text messaging.

Sutherland's claims about distilling texts, for what they are worth, seem equally applicable to a pencil and a note pad. Nonetheless, text messaging provides a new medium for the synopsis, a form of literary discourse relegated in the twentieth century to study guides marketed by companies such as CliffsNotes and SparkNotes. Writers and publishers of other materials, especially fiction, tend to eschew them as "spoilers," preferring dust jacket copy that teases rather than reveals. Teachers and parents, meanwhile, suspect that students rely on synopses as substitutes for literary texts rather than as supplements to them. Furthermore, some educators fear that text messaging provides a subtle and convenient means of cheating during quizzes and exams. It should come as no surprise, then, that commentators have largely denounced the Dot Mobile messages as travesties and lambasted Sutherland as an opportunist.[3]

Lost in this media onslaught is the fact that Milton's epic features a prose summary of each book, collectively and individually titled "The Argument" (Figures 8-18). These synoptic paragraphs make up the bulk of the front matter added in 1668 to the third issue of the ten-book first edition. In the twelve-book second edition, as Harris F. Fletcher informs us, the Argument became *Arguments*: "the Arguments were properly distributed to head each book throughout the poem, with the Arguments for Books 7 and 10 divided to form Arguments for Books 7 and 8, and 11 and 12 respectively."[4] In bibliographical terms, this re-positioning represents promotion: no longer relegated to the

[3] For example, see Sam Leith, "What's educational about saying Satan tempted man with an apel?" *Telegraph*, November 19, 2005, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2005/11/19/do1904.xml.

[4] *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 3:77.

preliminaries, the synopses became part of the central text. Hence they appear in "The Composition, Printing, and Publication" section of Fletcher's volume on the first edition, and in "The Text" section of his volume on the second edition. Fletcher considers their authority questionable, however. The summaries "must be taken lightly," he cautions, as they are not "particularly Miltonic in details."[5] With few exceptions, editors have followed his advice. Merritt Y. Hughes, whose *Complete Poems and Major Prose* (1957) held a near monopoly in the undergraduate Milton classroom for almost fifty years, annotates the poem but not its Argument. The dust jacket of the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, seventh edition, trumpets the inclusion of the "complete" *Paradise Lost*, but only the Argument of Book One appears with the poem.[6] Critics of the epic, meanwhile, tend to ignore the synopses altogether.

If the evidence against Milton's authorship were definitive, such neglect would still be irresponsible.[7] Yet Barbara K. Lewalski and William R. Parker, among countless other scholars, attribute the summaries to Milton.[8] In fact, I have yet to find a Miltonist, other than Fletcher, who casts doubt on their provenance. In disregarding the Argument,

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[5] Ibid.

[6] The Norton editors may have feared that students would rely too heavily on these "summary explanations of the actions in the various books," as a footnote describes them. If so, they may have overlooked the fact that some teachers ask their students to read the Arguments of unassigned books. See Virginia James Tufte, "Visualizing *Paradise Lost*: Classroom Use of Illustrations by Medina, Blake, and Dore," in *Approaches to Teaching Milton's* "*Paradise Lost*," ed. Galbraith M. Crump (New York: MLA, 1986), 113. Anthologies that do not include all of the books sometimes include all of the Arguments.

[7] See Chapter One, pages 33-35, for my discussion of the available evidence and why I believe it supports Milton's authorship.

[8] Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton*, 456; Parker, *Milton: A Biography*, 2:603, 617.

therefore, critics are dismissing the interpretive value of the form itself. A comment by the printer of the 1668 preliminaries, Samuel Simmons, seems to license this dismissal: "There was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, I have procur'd it."[9] Simmons crassly appeals to demand-side economics over artistry.

Seen in this light, the Argument may be understood as an insult to the poem, deemed insufficiently clear and in want of a prose supplement, or to the readers who were witless enough to want it. But this interpretation relies on our current prejudice against synopses and overstates the uniqueness of the Argument. As Robert J. Wickenheiser observes, "Milton was certainly aware that the most popular epics in the Renaissance, including those he admired, made use of Arguments; that Arguments in verse and prose, had, in fact, become part of the epic format."[10] According to Wickenheiser, even such luminaries as Ariosto, Tasso, and Du Bartas wrote Arguments for their epics (*YP* 8:7). But the synopses in editions of *Orlando Furioso*, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, and the *Sepmaines*, like those that accompany the works of Homer and Vergil, were actually composed by other poets, editors, and translators.[11] When Milton authored the Argument to his own epic, he had fewer predecessors than first appears.

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[9] Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 2:179.

[10] "Prose Accompanying *Paradise Lost*" (*YP* 8:7).

[11] Twenty-three years after Ariosto's death, the editor Girolamo Ruscelli and the renowned man of letters Scipione Ammirato contributed prose and verse argomenti, respectively, to the 1556 edition of *Orlando Furioso*. The first official edition of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), meanwhile, includes verse argomenti by Oratio Ariosti. Finally, the theologian Simon Goulart de Senlis composed summaries for the second edition of *La Sepmaine* (1581) and the third edition *La Seconde Sepmaine* (1593). See the bibliography for details on these editions.

Wickenheiser neglects to consider why Milton wrote his summaries in prose despite the fact that, as I will show, prevailing practice specified Arguments in verse for heroic poems. Allen H. Gilbert offers a practical explanation for this anomaly. Noting that an Argument also fronts *Samson Agonistes*, Gilbert speculates that Milton cobbled together the summaries from outlines—now lost—that served as guides during his years of labor on the two works.[12] He presumably composed these outlines prior to the Restoration and perhaps even before he became completely blind in 1652. As evidence, Gilbert points to Milton's plans for dramas in the *Trinity Manuscript*. The plans and Arguments, Gilbert contends, "are similar in manner. The form is that of notes for the author's own use rather than of prose addressed to an audience."[13] Gilbert also endeavors to show that in both cases, the Argument retains outdated material and thus "leaves an important portion [of the poem] little represented or gives not quite what the verses say."[14] The unflattering scenario Gilbert envisions is improbable, however, given that Milton expanded the Argument of Book 12 (Book 10 in 1668) for the second edition of *Paradise Lost*.[15] If the poet had earlier attempted to pass off, as an Argument, a working outline that failed to reflect the final form of the poem, it seems unlikely that he would have bothered to make a minor revision when wholesale changes were in order.

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[12] *On The Composition of "Paradise Lost": A Study of the Ordering and Insertion of the Material* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 27-32; "Is *Samson Agonistes* Unfinished?" *Philological Quarterly* 28 (1949): 98-106.

[13] *On The Composition of* "*Paradise Lost*," 28.

[14] Ibid., 32.

[15] Milton adds two phrases: "in the mention of *Abraham*" and "which was promised *Adam* and *Eve* in the Fall." See Wickenheiser, "Prose Accompanying *Paradise Lost*" (*YP* 8:7).

Gilbert's analysis of the Miltonic Arguments reflects a confusion, common even among men of letters, between a summary and a paraphrase. Whereas a paraphrase restates a passage in different words, a summary embodies a hierarchical strategy of inclusion and exclusion that varies with the summarizer and thus, from another's perspective, "leaves an important portion little represented." Moreover, Gilbert's assumption that a proper Argument should give "what the verses say" exemplifies what Cleanth Brooks called the "heresy of paraphrase": the notion that the meaning of a poem can be captured in prose.[16] According to Brooks, a poem is a structure whose form and content are inseparable and whose symbolic qualities resist propositional restatement. His chief adversary, Yvor Winters, argues instead that a poem is "an act of moral judgment" wherein a denotative and paraphrasable statement finds connotative and unique expression.[17] To Brooks, this view leads "toward an essential dualism between intellect and emotion, toward a preoccupation with rational meaning, and toward an overt moral."[18] In short, toward another heresy, which Poe termed "the heresy of *The Didactic*."[19] Frank Kermode finds that the conflict in literary criticism between discursive and figural notions of poetry, and between moral and aesthetic judgments of

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[16] *The Well Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1947), 192-214.

[17] *The Anatomy of Nonsense*, in *In Defense of Reason* (New York: The Swallow Press, 1947), 370.

[18] Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn,* 242-43.

[19] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Poetic Principle," in *The Complete Works of Edgar Allen Poe* (Ann Arbor, MI: Tally Hall Press, 1996), 1118.

poetic merit, is longstanding.[20] A shift in the critical vogue, Kermode observes, has major consequences for the reception of Milton's poems.[21]

Such vicissitudes matter little, however, to the reception of Milton's Arguments, which critics discount as either redundant or incommensurate with the poems. John K. Hale is perhaps the first Miltonist to make much of the seemingly obvious fact that, in the Argument to *Paradise Lost*, the author had an opportunity to respond to readers and encourage or suppress certain interpretations.[22] For Hale, the Argument "gives a tantalizing glimpse of the poet's attitude to his own poem some three years after it was finished, and one year after its publication."[23] In a close reading of the Arguments of several books, Hale finds that in addition to summarizing the action, Milton endeavors to "spell out" the theology, cosmology, and angelology of the poem. Whereas Milton paraphrases statements by God and the good angels, he reduces those of Satan, Adam, and Eve to speech-acts (e.g., "*The Serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces* [Eve] *at length to eat*").[24]

Like Gilbert, Hale notes that details of individual summaries fail to jibe with corresponding passages in the poem. But neither scholar checks the Argument as a

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[20] Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1957), 165-66. I substitute "figural" for Kermode's "symbolist" to connect his work with postmodern semiotics.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Others have noted the fact when referring to specific passages. See, for example, Alden Sampson, *Studies in Milton and an Essay on Poetry* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1913), 218.

[23] "The 1668 Argument to *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Quarterly* 35 (2001): 94. Hale apparently prefers Ellwood's estimation of the completion date (1665) to Phillips's (1663). For their testimony, see Chapter 1, pages 17-18.

[24] Ibid., 93.

whole for internal consistency. The reformatting of the second edition is partly to blame for this oversight. The new layout disrupted the Argument's formal unity and obscured its semi-autonomous origin. The synopses now appear to have been written concurrently with the books. But when read as a continuous narrative, they tell a different story. For example, the Argument of Book One relates that "Satan *with his Angels lying on the burning Lake, thunder-struck and astonisht, after a certain space recovers*" (Figure 8). Here we only get Satan's account of his resuscitation, whereas the poem has him "Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence / Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will / And high permission of all-ruling Heaven / Left him at large to his own dark designs" (1.210-213). In the poem, Milton portrays Satan as the unwitting instrument of God's glory and Man's salvation. In the Argument, he actually becomes that which he fancies himself—the relentless agent of Angelic apostasy and Man's damnation.

Turning to the Argument of Book Two, we are told that Satan "*passes on his journey to Hell Gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are op'nd*" (Figure 10). Here Milton reduces to one clause Satan's entire confrontation with Sin and Death (2.648-870), who go unnamed in the Argument until Book Ten, and makes no mention of the fact that God has entrusted Sin with the key to the gates of Hell (2.850-53). Thus when we first encounter God in the Argument of Book Three, he appears innocent of any role in Satan's flight towards Earth.[25] As far as the Argument is concerned, Satan escapes from Hell by virtue of his own indomitable spirit

[25] It should be noted, however, that even in the poem God never sees fit to mention, much less defend, his orchestration of the temptation of Adam and Eve. Perhaps Milton did not consider the matter vital to his theodicy. He defends God's practice of "good temptation" in *The Christian Doctrine* (*YP* 6:338).

and thirst for revenge. Coming to the cause of Satan's rebellion, Milton only refers to "*the occasion thereof*" (Figure 13). In eliding the begetting and exaltation of the Son, he skirts the poem's heretical Christology, assigns no responsibility to God for Satan's fall, and encourages the traditional view that Satan's actions are motivated solely by pride, envy, and hate. Similarly, the doubts Satan experiences on mount Niphates are registered vaguely and those in the garden not at all. In the Argument of Book Eight (now Book Nine), Satan actually becomes the Serpent of Genesis, evincing no qualms whatsoever about his "*meditated guile*" (Figure 15).

God the Father, meanwhile, is allowed the space to express himself at length. Hale notes that "Book 3's portion of the Argument is much the longest in relation to its number of lines."[26] The bulk focuses on the council in heaven—the core of Milton's theodicy—including several paraphrases of the Father's soteriological statements. But prior to the paraphrases, a terse speech act pointedly reveals Milton's purpose: "[God] *clears his own Justice and Wisdom from all imputation*" (Figure 10). Alden Sampson views this "as a sort of afterthought to reinforce that which most needed support."[27] Later, in the Argument of Book Five, Milton struggles to justify, in summary fashion, the Father's introduction of evangelism into the Garden of Eden: "*God to render Man inexcusable sends* Raphael *to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand; who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail* Adam *to know*" (Figure 13). In the corresponding lines from the poem (5.233-45), the last item

[26] "The 1668 Argument to *Paradise Lost*," 92.

[27] *Studies in Milton*, 218.

mentioned in the Argument is conspicuously absent from God's list of suggested topics. At any rate, Raphael does not tell Adam all he needs to know—he fails even to identify Satan as the source of Eve's "*troublesome dream*." Sampson finds the phrase *to render man inexcusable* "as relentless as Calvin or as Knox himself could have desired. There is not lacking in this a certain note of cruelty, abhorrent to a more sensitive and to a more lukewarm age."[28] Indeed, the phrase echoes Calvin's reading of Romans 1:20: "*Finis ergo legis naturalis est, ut reddatur homo inexcusabilis*" ("The end of the natural law, therefore, is to render man inexcusable").[29] Yet the Argument's stark rationale seems more generous than the petty justification God expresses in the poem: "this let him know, / Lest willfully transgressing he pretend / Surprisal, unadmonisht, unforewarnd" (5.243-45). Adam, it seems, is already inexcusable and the Father merely wants to pre-empt his complaints. In Book Seven, he professes a similarly negative motive for creating man—to spite Satan: "But least his heart exalt him in the harme / Already done, to have dispeopl'd Heav'n / My damage fondly deem'd, I can repaire That detriment" (7.150-53). The Argument of Book Seven, meanwhile, merely says that God, "*declar'd his pleasure to create another World and other Creatures to dwell therein*" (Figure 14).

Taken as a whole, therefore, the Argument does not so much highlight the poem's theodicy as offer a less problematic version of it. Who required such accommodation?

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[28] Ibid.

[29] *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, ed. A. Tholuck (Berlin: Halle, 1834), vol. 1, bk. 2, chap. 2, sec. 22, p. 218. An approximation of this language also appears in the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession of Faith* (London, 1646): "the Light of Nature, and the works of Creation and Providence do so farre manifest the Goodnesse, Wisdome, and Power of God, as to leave men unexcusable" (chap. 1, art. 1, p. 1).

Hale speculates that the Argument addresses the pious, unsophisticated reader of the poem and the essay on the verse the pedantic, sophisticated reader.[30] This division in intended readership, however, cannot be established on the basis of internal evidence alone. In the first chapter of this dissertation, I argued that the essay simultaneously participates in a learned contemporary debate and serves to inform less educated readers that unrhymed poems have a long history. In this chapter, I similarly historicize the Arguments to *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* in an effort to show that they also address a broad spectrum of readers.

A study of Arguments as a form of discourse in Early Modern print culture suggests that they were not aimed at readers of a lesser order. A verse argument was a display of poetic and editorial acumen, neatly summarizing a poem while reproducing its rhyme scheme and stanzaic structure. The lines were often enclosed in a xylographic frame, encouraging an analogy with an illustration or emblem. When taking the form of a short prose summary, on the other hand, Arguments were associated with logical terms (*argumenta*) supposedly occupying places (*loci* or *topoi*) in the mind as well as in books.[31] For booksellers, an Argument was a selling point because it conformed to the method of instruction practiced by the schools, a movement from the general to the particular. "The Law of Method," Milton writes, "which beares cheife sway in the Art of teaching, requires, that clearest and plainest expressions bee set formost, to the end they may enlighten any following obscurity" (*Animadversions*, *YP* 1:709-10). At Milton's

[30] "The 1668 Argument to *Paradise Lost*," 94.

[31] See Walter J. Ong, "Introduction" to *Art of Logic* (*YP* 8:170).

Cambridge and other bastions of Ramism, Sutherland's now outlandish claims for "texting" might have been taken for truisms. Walter J. Ong finds that the term "argument," when applied to a summary, "more than suggests the Ramist doctrine that any poem, like any other example of discourse, could be reduced by 'logical analysis' to a summary which was at root or in effect a syllogism."[32] This doctrine, which Brooks labeled a heresy 60 years ago, has been on the wane since logic was removed from core curricula in the early nineteenth century. "Particularly since the onset of the romantic age," Ong writes, "much criticism has looked with suspicion on any attempt to couple formal logic with poetry."[33] Milton himself had doubts about extending logical method to poetic instruction, as his initial failure to supply an Argument to *Paradise Lost* suggests: "to orators and poets should be left their own account of method, or at least to those who teach the art of oratory and poetry" (*Art of Logic*, *YP* 8:395).

Paradise Lost is not methodized in the Ramist sense, whatever its Argument implies. The fact that the summaries leave out much of what modern critics find valuable in the epic—the rationales of Adam, Eve, and Satan; the epic machinery; the similes, metaphors, and allusions—supports Brooks' contention that the meaning of a poem cannot be conveyed in another form. If an Argument were to adequately represent *what* a poem says, it would be a paraphrase rather than a summary, and it would still fail to adequately represent *how* a poem says what it says. Nonetheless, the poetic features that

[32] "Logic and the Epic Muse: Reflections on Noetic Structures in Milton's Milieu," in *Achievements of the Left Hand: Essays on the Prose of John Milton*, ed. Michael Lieb and John T. Shawcross (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), 262.

[33] Ibid., 239.

are of primary interest to critics like Brooks—ambiguity, paradox, irony—would have been secondary to Early Modern readers who, under the influence of Ramism, considered such devices paralogical. According to Ramus, poetry was merely a versified form of rhetoric, which was itself only the handmaiden of logic and often proved a hindrance, since for the sake of emotional appeal an orator might forgo logical connections and employ digressions and elaborations.[34] Therefore, to the extent that readers viewed the Argument to *Paradise Lost* as an encapsulation of the work's logical structure, it assumed for them a level of primacy over the poem. Some readers would even have inferred that this structure was intellectual as well as material, a framework to be internalized and imposed on the poem in procrustean fashion, bracketing out all heterogeneous matter.

With his Arguments, Milton exploits the methodological predispositions of his educated readers by concentrating in prose the theodicies diffused in his poems. This intervention was necessary given that *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* perform delicate balancing acts between the demands of genre and theology, which conflict as often as they coincide. In the former work, the incorporated prefaces or exordia reinforce the poem-as-epic; in the latter, the preliminary essay establishes the poem-as-drama. In each case, therefore, it falls to the Argument to supplement the poem-as-theodicy. Because the category *theodicy* carries no formal conventions, it is not a genre but rather a mode, a set of concerns and motifs expressible in multiple genres.[35] An

[34] See Walter J. Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (1958; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 252-54, 281-83.

[35] On genres and modes, see Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 56-7, 106-118.

Argument, meanwhile, reflects the genre and mode of the primary text. Accordingly, Milton's Arguments read as narrative apologetics. The style bears some similarity to that of his late prose works, which Thomas Corns describes as "a sober functionalism."[36]

The interpenetration of prose and verse in Milton's epic and drama should remind readers of his ever-present pedagogical agenda. Though he disagreed with Ramus on the subordination of oratory and poetry to logic, Milton concurred that all three arts should edify the audience.[37] This conviction, itself a heresy to Poe, led him to commit the heresy proscribed by Brooks. The two heresies entail each other, for if the lesson a poem teaches remains locked in a unique structure, a particular sequence of words, it holds little practical value. And if each reader takes a different meaning from a poem, communication breaks down. An Argument is tantamount to a claim that a message is transmittable across multiple texts and minds—perhaps even across cultures and epochs. More so than common readers, the Miltonic Arguments target critics, both contemporary and modern, who find themselves "in wandring mazes lost" when interpreting Milton's poems independently. In the sections that follow, I will survey the locations and functions of Arguments in the history of the book, perform a close reading of two of Milton's Arguments, and identify a recent trend in the criticism of *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* that has made reassessment of their Arguments urgent.

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[36] "Milton's Prose," *The Cambridge Companion to Milton*, ed. Dennis Danielson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 92.

[37] See *Of Education* (*YP* 2:402-06); *The Reason of Church-Government* (*YP* 1:816-17). See also Achsah Guibbory, "Milton and English Poetry," in *A Companion to Milton*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 73-74. Guibbory argues that Milton followed Sidney, Spenser, and Jonson in advancing "the moral function of poetry."

ARGUMENTS AND THE HISTORY OF THE BOOK[38]

Shortly after returning to England from his Continental tour (April 1638-July 1639), Milton completed the pastoral elegy *Epitaphium Damonis*, to which he appended a Latin prose *Argumentum* sketching the poem's narrative and closing with the following contextualization: "Damon here represents Charles Diodati, who was descended on his father's side from the Tuscan city of Lucca, but was English in all other respects. While he lived, he was a young man of outstanding talents, learning, and other most illustrious virtues" (John Leonard's translation).[39] The prose is hypotactic and reads like the preamble to a recital, which is not surprising given Milton's account of his experiences at the Italian academies: "some trifles which I had in memory, composed at under twenty or thereabout, (for the manner is, that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there,) met with acceptance above what was looked for" (*The Reason of Church-Government*, *YP* 1:836). Conversely, the more paratactic Arguments to *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* are intended to be read silently rather than recited aloud to an audience. Wittreich reasons along these lines when he writes of the latter: "Itself a feature of Senecan tragedy, Milton's 'Argument,' by its very presence, places *Samson Agonistes*, literally, in the tradition of closet drama and, philosophically, in the line of Senecan tragedy."[40] Wittreich's association of Arguments with closet drama is

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[38] If another such account has been published, I am unaware of its existence. Now that I have already undertaken extensive primary research, I am not as eager to find one. Be that as it may, I have produced little more than an outline for a subject worthy of a monograph.

[39] Leonard, ed., *John Milton: The Complete Poems* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 594-595.

[40] *Shifting Contexts: Reinterpreting "Samson Agonistes"* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2002), 34-35.

somewhat specious, however, as Arguments were often composed for the reading copies of performed plays.[41] His assertion that Arguments are a "feature of Senecan tragedy" is also misleading, though accurate. In Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, *Argumenta* were prefixed to the majority of extant Roman comedies and tragedies, not just to those by Seneca. Early Modern translations of Euripides, as well as Euripidean neoclassical tragedies, also feature prose or verse summaries.[42] An Argument was a stamp of Renaissance classical tragedy, as distinct from the popular, theatrical sort.

Arguments descend from the *hypotheseis* found in medieval manuscripts and ancient papyri.[43] In its most common and rudimentary form, a hypothesis to a play consists of the title, *incipit* (the first line of the prologue), and a plot summary. Rudolf Pfeiffer and other classicists have traced these and more elaborate hypotheses back to lost Hellenistic sources. Aristotle's *Didascalia* included performance details drawn from the Athenian archives as well as philological commentary. His pupil Dicaearchus (c. 350-285 B.C.) continued this work and may have added plot summaries. Callimachus (c. 280–245 B.C.), who took on the monumental task of cataloguing the library at Alexandria, devoted some of his *Pinakes*, or tablets, to annotated lists of dramas. Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 257–180 B.C.) wrote introductions to the plays he edited.

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[41] Jonson's *Seianus* (1605), hardly a closet drama, was published with a prose Argument.

[42] See, for example, the prose arguments in George Buchanan's Latin translations of Euripides' *Medea* (1544) and *Alcestis* (1556). Buchanan's *Iepthes sive Votum* (1554), a Euripidean biblical tragedy often cited as one of Milton's models for *Samson Agonistes*, has a prose Argument. Subsequent editions add a verse argument, written by Carolo Utenhovio. George Gascoigne's *Iocasta* (1572), an English adaptation of Euripides' *Phoenissa*, also has a verse Argument.

[43] For the history summarized in this paragraph, see Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 131-32, 190-96.

The connection between Arguments and hypotheses may at first seem tenuous due to the fact that the oldest surviving hypotheses were published in collections. Yet centuries later, hypotheses were paired with the texts they epitomize. The rationale for these unions remains something of a mystery in classical studies.[44] Whereas in catalogues, hypotheses help readers identify texts, texts seem to render plot summaries redundant. Readers and booksellers may have found such redundancy advantageous, however, especially for complex or archaic texts. The nominal change from *hypotheseis* to *argumenta* reflects the ascendancy of Latin over Greek and signifies, in logical terms, a move from merely stating facts about a particular case (or performance) to commenting on its pertinence to a general question.[45] Even Humanist textual scholars, who tended to oppose formal logic as practiced in the schools, employed Arguments to counterbalance literal translations. These scholars had two seemingly incompatible goals. They sought to recover, as nearly as possible, the authentic sacred and classical texts and make these restored texts accessible and relevant to readers. To further the latter end, marginal notes explaining specific details and Arguments setting forth general observations became two of the fundamental building blocks of the Humanist interface.

Arguments come into English literature through the efforts of early Protestant writers influenced by Humanist movements. In 1529, the German reformer Martin Bucer published his massive Latin commentary on the Psalms, *Sacrorum Psalmorum Libri Quinque*. Bucer introduced each psalm with a concise statement of its general context

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[44] Ibid., 194-196.

[45] See Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 170-71.

and interpretation, an "argumentum." Soon thereafter, the English evangelist George Joye translated Bucer's Psalms and Arguments while omitting his other annotations, as *The Psalter of Dauid in Englishe* […] *euery Psalme hauynge his argument before, declarynge brefly thentente [and] substance of the wholl Psalme* (1530).[46] This was the first English Psalter, the basis for the Psalms and Arguments in William Marshall's popular *Goodly Prymer* (1535).[47] As advertised on the title page, the Arguments declare the intent and substance of the Psalms—they do not paraphrase them. For example, the Argument to the 23rd Psalm provides no indication of a pastoral conceit: "in this psalme David declareth and setteth forth the mervelous suretie of the trust in God, & also how blessed a thinge it is."[48] Here the poetic metaphors have been stripped away from the prosaic message. Some of the other Arguments, such as that of the 22nd Psalm, are purely typological: "Here David declareth hymselfe playnly to be the very figure of Christe. Wherfore first of all he syngeth & expresseth his grate deiection and downefall: & anon aftir his exaltation, his encrese and purchesying of his kyngdome, even to the uttermost partes of the lande and the continuance ther of unto the worldes end."[49]

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[46] On Joye's translation of Bucer see Gerald Hobbs, "Martin Bucer and the Englishing of the Psalms: Pseudonymity in the Service of Early English Protestant Piety," in *Martin Bucer: Reforming Church and Community*, ed. David F. Wright (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 161-175. See also Constantin Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1946), 205-250.

[47] Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation*, 223. Though the *OED* cites Marshall's *Goodly Prymer* (1535), which was authorized by the Church of England, Joye's *Psalter* is probably the earliest instance of this usage of the word "Argument" in English.

[48] George Joye, *The Psalter of Dauid in Englishe*, 34v (E2v).

[49] Ibid., 31r-v.

Unlike most of the Arguments that accompany Renaissance dramas, those in Joye's Psalter exhibit a concern with interpretation over mere summary of content. In this respect they resemble the *argumenta* of the Catholic exegetical tradition, which were conventionally set forth in prose as befitting the gravity of their scriptural subject matter, the necessity of doctrinal precision, and the poetic ability of their authors.[50] But whereas these Arguments were composed for scholars and churchmen, Joye's offered a model to English translators seeking a new scriptural interface by which to mediate the Word of God to the masses. Jon Rogers, who like Joye had been an associate of William Tyndale at Antwerp, prefixed Arguments to every chapter of the Bible—though he chose not to label them "Arguments" per se.[51] His "Matthew's Bible" (1537) combines Tyndale's published and unpublished translations with revised material from Miles Coverdale's Bible (1535). Coverdale had improved on Tyndale's design by placing a table of sentence-long chapter summaries before each book instead of the whole work. For his part, Rogers deemed Arguments more effective than tables—if not as finding aids, then as a means of pointing readers in a Lutheran direction. To this end he also included Tyndale's tendentious Prologue to *Romans* and exegetical marginal notes, yet the Bible

[50] The eleventh-century "Paris Psalter," for example, excerpts and translates into anglo-saxon the *argumenta* from a contemporaneous commentary, Manegold of Lautenbach's *In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis*. See J. Douglas Bruce, "Immediate and Ultimate Source of the Rubrics and Introductions to the Psalms in the Paris Psalter," *Modern Language Notes* 8 (1893): 72-82. In some versions of the Latin Vulgate, the last prologue before the text of each book is rubricated "Argumentum." These Arguments supplement more extensive prefaces and introductory epistles by summarizing the matter of books in a manner suitable for quick reference. Chapters and Psalms, meanwhile, are rubricated for liturgical rather than explanatory purposes.

[51] For *Psalms*, Rogers consulted Bucer and Joye's Arguments. See Hobbs, "Martin Bucer and the Englishing of the Psalms," 171-73; Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation*, 215-16.

still managed to receive a royal license. In 1553, however, "John Rogers alias Mathewe" was arrested and charged with heresy.[52]

Shortly after Rogers's martyrdom in 1555, a group of Marian exiles began working on a revised translation at Geneva. For the interface, William Whittingham and the other editors adopted the now standard verse numbering scheme developed by Robert Estienne (or Stephanus) in his Greek New Testament (1551) and French Bible (1553).[53] They then adapted the function of their Arguments, set in italics, to designated locations in the text, set in Roman. In the Geneva Bible (1560), short unlabeled summaries keyed to specific verses appear above each chapter. Arguments of books and epistles, labeled THE ARGUMENT in capitals, span both columns of the text. They present an exegesis or, in the terminology of later Puritan divines, the *application* of the text by the reader. Thus the primary and secondary functions of Arguments, summary and commentary respectively, each hold sway in a different species of superscription. The marginal notes, set in Roman, provide *interpretations* of individual words and phrases as well as germane observations keyed alphabetically to the text.

The Geneva Bible's unabashed attempt to manage readers through its interface was surpassed only by the "Douay-Rheims Bible" (1582, 1609-10), the first English

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[52] Though Rogers had not used the pseudonym "Thomas Matthew" for 16 years, he could not conceal from the newly (re)enfranchised Roman Catholic authorities his role in making what was substantially Tyndale's translation an authorized Bible of the Church of England. On Rogers and Matthew's Bible, see Hugh Pope and Sebastian Bullough, *English Versions of the Bible* (St. Louis: Herder, 1952), 175-86.

[53] Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederick Moule, *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the British and Foreign Bible Society* (New York: Kraus, 1963), no. 4623, 3719.

translation by Roman Catholic scholars.[54] In these two large volumes, sections devoted to commentary and anti-Protestant polemics force the text itself to wait in queue.[55] Conversely, the scaled-down interface of the "King James Bible" (1611), authorized by the Church of England, embodies a conservative reaction against the use of Arguments as launching pads for sectarian intervention. Its chapter headings soberly itemize the content with sentence fragments keyed to verses, a far cry from the pointedly discursive Arguments of the Douay-Rheims and Geneva Bibles. These fragments serve as finding aids for those already well familiar with the contents, as they lack sufficient information to communicate a sense of the narrative to the uninitiated.

Arguments in English translations of classical texts, meanwhile, have a wider focus than those in biblical texts and seek to introduce the contents to the reader. Thomas Underdowne's *An AEthiopian Historie of Heliodorus* (1569) provides an informative early example. Its subtitle proclaims *the argumente of euery booke, sette before the whole vvoorke*. As in the case of *Paradise Lost*, their unconventional placement probably signifies a late addition that was similarly corrected in the second edition (1577), whose new subtitle—*Whervnto is also annexed the argument of euery booke, in the beginning of the same, for the better vnderstanding of the storie*—affords a glimpse of the location and function assigned to Arguments in Renaissance renditions of classical narrative and

[54] The New Testament was published at Rheims in 1582 and the Old Testament at Douay (Douai) in 1610-11. Gregory Martin and others translated the Latin Vulgate into English. See John Henry Cardinal Newman, "The Text of the Rheims and Douay Version of Holy Scripture," *Rambler* (Ju1y 1859): 145-69.

[55] The title page advertises *arguments of the books and chapters, annotations, tables, and other helps for better understanding of the text, for discovery of corruptions in some late translations, and for clearing controveries in religion*.

dramatic literature. They serve as comprehension aids rather than finding aids. In contrast to many scriptural Arguments, they take the form of synopses rather than subject headings or exegetical abstracts. As for their location and appearance, we can distinguish Arguments from other superscripts in two particulars: they only precede books or other major divisions, and they are not keyed to the text. Arguments do not exceed one paragraph of prose or one stanza of verse. With few exceptions, most notably Spenser's quatrains in the *Fairie Queene* (1590), they are labeled "Argument." The interface of the Geneva Bible may have contributed to these conventions. Because an Argument writ large heads each book, readers probably stopped thinking of the unlabeled chapter headings as Arguments.

Italian printers, meanwhile, published vernacular classics by such authors as Boiardo and Ariosto in the same format as the Greek and Latin classics.[56] To this end, the Florentine editor Francesco Sansovino prepared lavish editions of contemporary Italian poets, furnished with Arguments, woodcuts, annotations, and other accoutrements previously reserved for the ancients. S. K. Heninger identifies Sansovino's edition of Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, published at Venice in 1571, as Edmund Spenser's model for the intricate layout of *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579).[57] While acknowledging this reliance, Richard A. McCabe speculates that Spenser's diverse pattern of typefaces is

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[56] See Brian Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text: 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[57] Heninger, "The Typographical Layout of Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender*," in *Word and Visual Imagination: Studies in the Interaction of English Literature and the Visual Arts*, ed. Karl Josef Hèoltgen, Peter M. Daly, and Wolfgang Lottes (Erlangen: Universitèatsbund Erlangen-Nèurnberg: Universitèatsbibliothek Erlangen-Nèurnberg, 1988), 33-72. This article contains several facsimiles from Sannazaro's *Arcadia* and Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender.*

based on Abraham Fleming's *The Bucolickes of Publius Virgilius Maro* (1575).[58] As a young man with high poetic ambitions, Spenser could view in these volumes the editorial scaffolding and encomia he hoped would one day enshrine his own works. Sannazaro and Vergil did not, of course, write their own Arguments or annotations. These came later, and by others. To speed up this process for *The Shepheardes Calender*, Spenser seems to have devised a strategy if not also a pair of alter egos: "E. K." would commend and gloss "Immerito" just as Sansovino had done for Sannazaro and Fleming for Vergil. The faux classical interface would complement the poem's archaic language and claim for the book a stature that the poem had not yet merited.

Today, critics scrutinize this interface and its dubious provenance as closely as the text itself. McCabe observes that "the verse is set in black letter or Gothic typeface (the sole instance in the Spenserian canon), the notes in roman typeface, and the striking contrast functions to promote the complex relationship between text and gloss."[59] E. K.'s Arguments stand out even more prominently in roman italics—though proper nouns are not italicized. The Arguments in the first edition of *Paradise Lost* are set in much the same font, and make similar exceptions for proper nouns. While this resemblance may owe to the standardization of printing in the seventeenth century, the presence of Arguments in both poems testifies to the fact that, nearly one hundred years later, the mature Milton found himself in a predicament similar to that of the young Spenser.

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[58] McCabe, "Annotating Anonymity, or Putting a gloss on the *Shepheardes Calendar*," *Ma(r)king the Text: The Presentation of Meaning on the Literary Page*, ed. Joe Bray, Miriam Handley, Anne C. Henry (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 35-54.

[59] Ibid., 37.

Ascending to the heights of the ancients in poesy, or higher yet, would not suffice for recognition—the material artifact would have to look the part. Lewalski leaves half the story untold, therefore, when she assumes that Simmons solicited the Argument and the essay in order "to help readers better understand the content and form of the work."[60] The intrinsic value of the Arguments to the reader may have been secondary to the larger project of classicizing the interface—as is the case with *The Shepheardes Calender*. John Ogilby's Homer (1660), "adorn'd with sculptures and illustrated with annotations," had placed the standard of interface design where no middle flight could soar. For each eclogue or book he translated, Ogilby had also composed an Argument. After months of lagging sales, Simmons probably decided that this was a minimum formal requirement.

If the Argument to *Paradise Lost* fulfilled one convention, it broke another. In the seventeenth century, Arguments to non-dramatic poetry were typically composed in short verse stanzas—not long prose paragraphs. Sir John Harington initiated this vogue with his translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1591), perhaps the finest illustrated English book of the sixteenth century—Milton himself may have owned a copy.[61] Harington's *Orlando* imitates the sumptuous Franceschi edition of 1584, from which he translates the *Argomenti* in ottava rima of Scipione Ammirato.[62] In "An Advertisement to the Reader," Harington offers an explanation of the location and function of these

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[60] *The Life of John Milton*, 456.

[61] See *The Works of John Milton*, ed. Patterson et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 18:330-336, 569-70. Jackson C. Boswell claims that the marginalia in this copy are not in Milton's hand; see *Milton's Library* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1975), 11.

[62] See Townsend Rich, *Harington and Ariosto: A Study in Elizabethan Verse Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1940), 53-60.

Arguments: "I have in a staffe of eight verses comprehended the contents of every booke or canto, in the beginning thereof, which hath two good uses, one, to understand the picture the better, the other, to remember the storie the better."[63] Although Harington's claim to have "comprehended the contents" of each canto in eight verses strains credulity, his acceptance of the challenge imposed by the parameters of ottava rima, here as well as in the rest of the poem, is commendable. Others would pick up the gauntlet that Harington had thrown down on behalf of Ariosto, either translating the Arguments of previous editors or deriving Arguments from the original text: Fairfax for Tasso (1600), Sylvester for Du Bartas (1605), Sandys for Ovid (1626), Ogilby for Vergil (1650) and Homer (1660).[64] Quarles composed Arguments in couplets for his *Job* paraphrase, *A Feast for Worms* (1620), as did D'Avenant for his own heroic poem *Gondibert* (1651) and Butler for his mock-epic *Hudibras* (1663-78).

Milton did not follow this trend partly because, unlike these poets, he hoped to boost the reader's comprehension through his Arguments. Metrical Arguments are an ancient form of editorial virtuosity intended primarily to amuse readers, not to provide clarification of textual matters. Above the earliest surviving texts of the comedies of Plautus, for example, acrostic *argumenta* spell out the titles. The titles help readers

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[63] Ariosto, *Orlando furioso in English heroical verse by Iohn Haringto[n],* [London: Richard Field, 1591], A1v.

[64] These editions are titled *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The Recouerie of Ierusalem. Done into English Heroicall verse, by Edward Fairefax Gent* (London: I. Iaggard and M. Lownes, 1600); *Bartas: his Deuine VVeekes and workes Translated: & Dedicated to the Kings most excellent Maiestie, by Iosuah Sylvester* (London: Humfrey Lownes, 1605); *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished by G.S.* (London: 1626); *The Works of Publius Virgilius Maro Translated by John Ogilby* (London: Andrew Crook, 1650); *Homer his Iliads Translated, Adorn'd with Sculpture, and Illustrated with Annotations by John Ogilby* (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1660).

remember the verses of the *argumenta*, which function in turn as mnemonics for the plots. The mnemonic relationship between text and image that Harington asserts (translating the Italian editor Ruscelli) is ultimately based on Horace's equation, *ut pictura poesis*, and Simonides of Ceos's motto: *"*Poema pictura loquens, pictura poema silens*"* (poetry is a speaking picture, painting a silent poetry).[65] Harington's *Orlando* promotes this relationship materially, setting the Arguments in ornate frames beside the synoptic illustrations. This design, standard in Italian illustrated editions and to a lesser extent in English ones, suggests that verse Arguments can complement and even substitute for illustrations. The Renaissance notion of the "sister arts" derives from classical aesthetic tradition as well as from emblem books. An emblem typically combines a picture with a motto and/or poem, each of which aids in the interpretation of the other/whole. But the first emblems were merely epigrams conveying a literary conceit or moral precept through allegorical ekphrasis.[66] Emblems were conceived, therefore, as textual, pictorial, or both—and verse Arguments as narrative emblems. Pictorial complements to Arguments were abundant: polyscenic, diachronic images vied with monoscenic, synchronic images throughout the Renaissance.[67] Even as late as 1688, John Baptist de Medina, an artist commissioned to illustrate the fourth edition of *Paradise Lost*, opted to depict multiple episodes in each design, which was then engraved

[65] On Horace, Simonides, and the *ut pictura poesis* tradition, see Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory Of Painting* (1940; repr., New York: Norton, 1967).

[66] On early emblems, see John Manning, "A Bibliographical Approach to the Illustrations in Sixteenth-century Editions of Alciato's *Emblemata*," in Peter M. Daly, ed., *Andrea Alciato and the Emblem Tradition* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 127-76.

[67] On images as narratives, see Alastair Fowler, *Renaissance Realism: Narrative Images in Literature and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 20-24.

and juxtaposed with the appropriate Argument. But Arguments were held to transcend their material representations. This double logic has resulted in editorial confusion, as in the passage where Milton depicts Satan's legions as carrying "Shields / Various, with boastful *Argument* portraid" (6.83-84 [my italics]). David Masson glosses *Argument* as a Latinism meaning "a carved or painted design," noting Milton's usage in *Epitaphium Damonis*: "circùm gemino cælaverat *argumento*" (184, my italics).[68] Subsequent editors usually concur with Masson's gloss, despite its incompatibility with the verb "portraid" and the fact that translators of his proof text have consistently rendered *argumento* as the "motif," "subject," or "theme" of the design rather than the design itself. Hughes is a notable exception: "the signification of the inscriptions or emblems on the shields."[69]

Since metrical Arguments were associated with heraldic devices, mythic scenes, royalist poets, and chivalric romances, it comes as no surprise that this form was rejected for the "higher Argument" of *Paradise Lost*. As befitting its biblical subject matter and exegetical passages, the Argument to *Paradise Lost* hearkens back to sixteenth-century scriptural forms. Milton might have been aware of at least one contemporary precedent: the prose summaries in Abraham Cowley's unfinished *Davideis* (1656). Cowley (or his printer) labeled these synopses "The Contents," probably because in that era, as we have seen, an Argument to a poem was expected to emulate its versification. Cowley also composed a preface and an apparatus of explanatory notes for his epic. *Paradise Lost*, on the other hand, was first published without an interfacial site for commentary. When

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[68] Masson, ed., *The Poetical Works of John Milton* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 3:364.

[69] Hughes, ed., *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose* (1957; repr., Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2003), 326.

Simmons requested an Argument, therefore, Milton likely saw an opportunity to make it bear this responsibility, in addition to its synoptic burden.

Though eighteenth-century neoclassical poets rarely emulated Milton's blank verse, they often wrote Arguments in prose for longer poems. Dryden and Pope, for example, wrote prose arguments for their verse translations of Vergil (1697) and Homer (1715-26) respectively. At the dawn of the Romantic age, Blake exhibited his contrarian spirit by crafting a verse Argument to *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790). But the majority of Romantic poets preferred prose summaries. Coleridge's notorious gloss to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), added in 1817, is essentially an Argument cast into the margins, since it reads as a continuous narrative. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, poets, editors, and translators gradually discontinued the practice. Not surprisingly, the disappearance of Arguments from texts in the twentieth century was roughly contemporaneous with the fading from the universities of formal logic. We no longer use the word "argument," as Ramists did, for the topic or place where an argument resides as well as for the argument itself.[70] Milton, on the other hand, subscribed to the Ramist doctrine that "an argument, properly speaking, is neither a word nor a thing, but a certain relevance of a thing to arguing" (*Art of Logic*, *YP* 8:220). Accordingly, the Arguments to *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* do not itemize the narratives of the poems so much as they identify the aspects of these narratives that are most relevant to the embedded theodicies. In the next section, I will demonstrate this functionality by comparing two of these summaries to the corresponding passages from the poems.

[70] Ong, "Logic and the Epic Muse," 246.

THE MILTONIC ARGUMENTS

The Arguments serve as roadmaps through the poems. They note landmarks essential to the theodicy and deemphasize or omit details more relevant to the genre. Because of its one-to-one ratio with the poem, the Argument to *Samson Agonistes* allows us to examine this strategy in microcosm (Figure 19). The synopsis resembles Judges 16:21-31 as much as it does the poem: only Manoa's bid to ransom Samson stands out as a significant addition to the biblical account. Presciently, Milton anticipates Samuel Johnson's famous critique, published in *The Rambler* of 16 July 1751 (no. 139), that *Samson Agonistes* "has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act."[71] The Argument realizes Johnson's hypothetical revision—the clause "*who in the mean while is visited by other persons*," which appears squarely in the middle of the summary, fills in for lines 710-1296 (the "superfluous" visits by Dalila and Harapha). These 586 lines constitute Acts III and IV, roughly the middle third of the drama's 1758 lines. Thus only one episode—the officer's summons—is represented as a *sine qua non* of Samson's death. While it is doubtful that the Argument was itself a *sine qua non* of Johnson's critique, the fact that he never refers to it in his discussion of *Samson Agonistes* is not sufficient evidence to discount such a possibility. Most critics do not acknowledge, and probably fail to appreciate or recognize, the influence of Arguments on their readings of texts.

[71] John T. Shawcross, *Milton, 1732-1801: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1972), 219-220.

Ironically, the episodes that Johnson and the Argument discount became the focus of much subsequent criticism. For some, the visits by Manoa, Dalila, and Harapha dramatize Samson's psychic or spiritual regeneration, which results in his return to his divinely appointed vocation—agitating and murdering Philistines.[72] Others find that, while the episodes do not cause the catastrophe, they do teach the chorus and/or the reader how to interpret it.[73] Feisal G. Mohamed sets the terms of comparison or contrast: "if Milton's Samson is indeed the hero of faith recorded in Hebrews 11, the final slaughter of the Philistines must be different in kind from the three encounters of the tragedy's middle: he will be a hero under the terms of the gospel if and only if he is not avenging his loss of eyesight, not succumbing to fleshly lust, and not settling a tribal blood feud."[74] Mohamed sides with Stanley Fish, who argues that, in the poem's antinomian cosmos, Samson's last action "is an expression, however provisional, of his reading of the divine will; and insofar as it represents his desire to conform to that will, it is a virtuous action. No other standard for evaluating it exists."[75] Wittreich reaches the opposite conclusion. For him, Milton's revision of Judges militates against the orthodox view of Samson as a type of Christ. In *Interpreting Samson Agonistes* (1986), Wittreich uncovers evidence suggesting that dissent to this typological view was not uncommon

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[72] See, for example, Anthony Low, *The Blaze of Noon: A Reading of "Samson Agonistes"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 99-107; Radzinowicz, *Toward* "*Samson Agonistes*," 274-79.

[73] See, for example, John P. Rumrich, "Samson and the Excluded Middle," in *Altering Eyes*: *New Perspectives on* "*Samson Agonistes*," ed. Mark R. Kelley and Joseph Wittreich (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2002), 307-32.

[74] "Confronting Religious Violence: Milton's "*Samson Agonistes*," *PMLA* 120, no. 2 (2005): 331.

[75] *How Milton Works*, 426.

among Milton's contemporaries, forcing even Hill to concede that his own portrayal of seventeenth-century hermeneutics had been too monolithic.[76] But Hill disputes Wittreich's claim that Samson final action was personal rather than partisan, self-directed rather than divinely inspired. Hill observes that "Milton's own argument to the play rejects in advance Wittreich's interpretation: Samson was 'at length persuaded inwardly that this the summons to Dagon's temple was from God'."[77]

Not only does Hill misquote the Argument, supplying the antecedent to *this* in "*this was from* God," he makes it prove too much. The question of whether Samson believes that God desires him to break the Law by attending a pagan feast is separate from the question of whether he believes God desires him to kill everyone at that feast, including himself. Milton reinforces this distinction when Samson declares—twice—his ignorance of the outcome of his decision to go with the officer (1389, 1426). The drama itself rejects, not "in advance" but retroactively, Hill's interpretation of the Argument. Furthermore, while the Argument confirms that Samson believes his "rouzing motions" and "presage in the mind" (1382, 1387) come from God, it does not confirm that Samson is indeed divinely inspired. In fact, his last reported words are "Now *of my own accord* such other tryal / I mean to shew you of my strength, yet greater; / As with amaze shall strike all who behold" (1643-45, my italics). Wittreich interprets "of my own accord" as Samson's declaration to the Philistines that he will perform his finale uncommanded by

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[76] Cp. "*Samson Agonistes* Again," *Literature and History* 1 (1990): 26; *Milton and the English Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1978), 428.

[77] "*Samson Agonistes* Again," 34.

them *and* without sanction from God.[78] Samson allegedly utters these words after standing for "a while" with his arms on the pillars "as one who pray'd / Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd" (1637-38). Within this duration, some critics envision Samson calling to the Lord as he does in the book of Judges: "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, onely this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines, for my two eyes" (16:28).[79] But this possibility seems unlikely because Milton's Samson does not need to be filled by the "Spirit of the Lord" before his greatest feats—his "gift of strength" has returned with his hair (1354-55). In fact, the question of divine sanction, which has dominated recent criticism of the drama, is moot in the biblical account, since Samson's strength only returns after his prayer.

After petitioning God for strength, the biblical Samson cries, "Let mee die with the Philistines" (16:30). These words, as well as his prayer, seem to contradict Augustine's position that "the Spirit who through him had been working miracles had secretly ordered this."[80] For the Samson of Judges seeks vengeance against the Philistines as well as his own death. The marginal notes of the Geneva Bible militate against this straightforward reading, contending that Samson prays "according to [his] vocation, which is to execute God's judgment on the wicked," and "speaketh not this of despair, but humbling himself for neglecting his office and the offence thereby given." In

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[78] Wittreich, *Interpreting* "*Samson Agonistes*," 143.

[79] All biblical citations are from the first edition of the "King James Bible." See The Church of England, *The Holy Bible Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New*… (London, 1611).

[80] *The City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. George E. McCracken (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), bk. 1, chap. 21, pp. 95-97.

the effort to Christianize Samson, the Geneva editors distort the text and oppose their mentor Calvin, who writes of the prayer, "although there was some mixture of good zeal, yet his ruling feeling was a fervid, and therefore vicious longing for vengeance."[81]

Much ink has been spilled recently on whether Milton's equivocation over Samson's prayer casts doubt on the divine sponsorship of his final action. Few have noted, however, that Milton consistently downplays the revenge motive that is the content of this prayer. Samson attributes his treatment by the Philistines to God, who "cast me off as never known, / And to those cruel enemies, / Whom I by his appointment had provok't, / Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss / Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated / The subject of thir cruelty, or scorn" (641-46). Nonetheless, he primarily blames himself for his predicament, and before the entrance of the officer his sole stated ambition is to die: "my deadliest foe will prove / My speediest friend, by death to speed me hence; / The worst that he can give, to me the best" (1262-64). Through their laudatory *post mortems*, Manoa and the Chorus seek to obfuscate this death wish. Their aim is not to justify Samson's slaughter of the Philistines, but rather to show how such an obvious good outweighs an apparent evil—his violation of the Law prohibiting "self-violence" (1584).[82] Similarly, the main topic of conversation leading up to the

[81] *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), Bk. 3, Ch. 20, Sec. 15.

[82] "Self-violence" was a euphemism for "self-murder" (OED), one of several employed by Manoa and the Chorus. The word "suicide" was a rare neologism in mid-seventeenth-century English. It appears in Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* (1656), but not in *The New World of English Words* (1658) by Milton's nephew Edward Phillips. In *Biathanatos* (1646) John Donne uses "self-homicide" among other variants.

catastrophe is how to reconcile God's justice with Samson's condition, given that his glorious actions against the Philistines overshadow his self-destructive mistakes.

These concerns about Samson's fate are strikingly remote from those of recent criticism, which interrogates Milton's attitude toward religious violence. Today, critics want to focus on what Samson does to the Philistines rather than to himself. The question of his suicide, therefore, tends to be brushed aside. But this question becomes absolutely crucial when the focus of discussion moves from the phenomenon of religious violence in general to the specifics of Samson's case. Mohamed's criteria for the Christianization of Samson, for example, are glaringly incomplete: above personal revenge, bodily comfort, or tribal duty, Samson must not be motivated by a desire to commit suicide.[83] The Argument to *Samson's Agonistes*, as I will show, signals that the drama participates in contemporary intellectual debates over the sin of suicide and the institution of martyrdom.

On the ethics of suicide, modern distinctions are arguably less sophisticated than those of Milton's time. In the post-Freudian idiom of the secular West, "suicidal behavior" is any course of action (positive) or inaction (negative) performed with an awareness (conscious or subconscious) that it invites death. Emile Durkheim defines

[83] Milton subscribed to the orthodox view of suicide as a sin of despair or self-hatred (*Christian Doctrine*, *YP* 8:719). Manoa expresses a similar sentiment in *Samson Agonistes* 505-13. Under an entry titled *Mors spontanea* ("death unassisted") in his commonplace book, Milton records passages from Dante's *Inferno* and Sidney's *Arcadia* (*YP* 1:381). For the Latin, see *A Common-Place Book of John Milton, and a Latin Essay and Latin Verses Presumed to be by Milton*, ed. Alfred J. Horwood (Westminster: The Camden Society, 1876). Like Dante, Milton groups suicides with those who cut short their divinely allotted life spans through depravity and vice (*Christian Doctrine*, *YP* 8:340). In *Paradise Lost* (9.1020-46) Adam echoes Sidney's Philocea by advising against suicide on the grounds that it is an act of false courage designed to avoid future suffering or shame.

suicide as "death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result."[84] This definition, standard in sociology for over one hundred years, employs roughly the same terminology as the entry on suicide in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907-1912). But Durkheim forgoes any consideration of intentionality or divine agency, criteria by which orthodox Christianity has distinguished martyrdom from suicide since Augustine.[85] Without such qualifications, a martyr's refusal to abjure his faith becomes a negative act of indirect suicide and Samson's destruction of the theatre becomes a positive act of direct suicide. Today, virtually all Miltonists utilize the term *suicide* unambiguously to describe Samson's death.

In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, self-murder was regarded as a criminal act. Legally, all cases of self-killing were ruled self-murder except those in which the victim was found to be insane.[86] The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church was similarly draconian and, consequently, some theologians denied that Samson knowingly or willingly killed himself—a position refuted by Donne in *Biathanatos*

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[84] Durkheim, *Suicide, a Study in Sociology*, trans. John A. Spaulding and George Simpson (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1951), 44.

[85] Durkheim considers advisedness more ascertainable than intentionality in determining suicide cases. Augustine distinguishes early Christian martyrs from pagan suicides such as Cato as well as from Christian sectarians who fancied martyrdom *de rigueur*. He asserts that martyrdom cannot be voluntary, pre-emptive, or aggressive; see *The City of God Against the Pagans*, bk. 1, ch. 16-27.

[86] See Michael MacDonald and Terence R. Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 15-16. Those found guilty of self-murder were denied Christian burial and their property was forfeited to the crown. In *Hamlet* Act V, scene 1, the priests refuse the mad Ophelia certain obsequies after her death by drowning.

(1647).[87] Donne cites Cajetan's commentary on Samson as the basis for his own distinction between self-murder and other forms of self-homicide: "Our actions, which bee Morally good or bad, must bee judged to be such, by the first reason which moves them, not by any accident, or concomitance, accompanying, or succeeding them, though necessarily."[88] Cajetan's formulation, derived from Aristotle via Aquinas, reveals the inadequacy of empirical definitions of suicide. It points up a fundamental difference between suicide as a means of ending one's life and suicide as a means of ending others' lives; for if it were always as efficient to inflict damage on one's enemies without self-destruction, we would probably have no concept of kamikazes or suicide bombers today.

Donne's argument that all judgments should be based on individual circumstances, rather than the mere fact of volitional self-homicide, may have influenced Milton's views on suicide and the Samson legend.[89] The Argument registers these nuanced views. By dividing the catastrophe into multiple effects and causes ("*what* Samson *had done to the* Philistins*, and by accident to himself*") Milton accentuates the problem of distinguishing good from bad motives when they have the same outcomes. In the terminology of Aristotelian causality, Samson is a *per se* efficient cause of the Philistines' death and a *per accidens* efficient cause of his own, in that the former rather

[87] Donne cites Francisco de Victoria and Gregor de Valentia as holding such opinions; see Donne, *Biathanatos: a Declaration of that Paradoxe, or Thesis, that Self-homicide is not so naturally Sinne, that it may never be otherwise* (London: J. Dawson, [1646]) pt. 3, dist. 5, sec. 4, p. 199.

[88] Donne, *Biathanatos*, pt. 3, dist. 5, sec. 8, p. 210.

[89] George F. Butler makes a persuasive case for this influence in "Donne's *Biathanatos* and *Samson Agonistes*: Ambivalence and Ambiguity," *Milton Studies* 34 (1997): 199-219.

than the latter effect is consistent with the end or final cause of his action.[90] Thus the Argument gives Milton an opportunity to assent to the choral proposition that Samson was "self-kill'd / Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold / Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd / Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more / Then all thy life had slain before" (1664-68).[91] Without this intervention, the reader is left to speculate on whether or not any of the interpretations offered by the characters resonate with Milton.

Today, when the winds of jihad have stirred up reassessments of Samson as a terrorist and suicide bomber, the Argument's clarifications—that Samson interprets the summons as divine and that his final act was not essentially suicidal—are especially relevant to Milton studies.[92] The Argument implies that Samson kills himself and the Philistines out of a religious zeal not necessarily stoked by divine inspiration. Milton leaves it to the readers and characters of the drama to render a moral judgment on Samson's deed. The episodes that the Argument passes over tend to support Wittreich's reading of the drama as a critique of religious and/or racially motivated violence:

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[90] See *Art of Logic*, Book I, Chapters 3-9 (*YP* 8:222-241). A *per se* efficient cause produces an effect through nature or deliberation, without being compelled by an external force. A *per accidens* efficient cause produces an effect under coercion or fortuitously. A final cause is the end for the sake of which the effect was produced.

[91] The Chorus echoes Horace: "dira Necessitas / Clavos, non animum metu, / Non mortis laqueis expedies caput" ("your head will not escape dire necessity's nail, nor your soul fear, nor death's snare"). See Horace, *Odes and Epodes*, ed. Charles E. Bennett (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1901) bk. 3, no. 24, lines 5-8, p. 118. But the reference to "law" suggests that the Chorus speaks of physics in addition to destiny. A falling roof will prove indiscriminately deadly to all those standing beneath it.

[92] Jackie DiSalvo provocatively applied the term "terrorist" to Samson at an International Milton Symposium (Bangor, Wales, 1995); see Roy Flanagan, *Riverside Milton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 795. John Carey argues that Samson "is, in effect, a suicide bomber" in "A Work in Praise of Terrorism? September 11 and *Samson Agonistes*," *Times Literary Supplement*, September 6, 2002, 15-16.

Samson's conversation with Dalila attests to the moral equivalence of their actions while his confrontation with Harapha invites the traditional comparison of Samson with the rash Hercules. But Samson resists the rational grounds of their arguments, insisting that he has a special calling to perform "hostile acts" (1208-1219) and that Dalila's false religion belies her show of zeal (895-900). In *The Christian Doctrine*, Milton argues that only true zeal leads to glorious deeds and martyrdom (*YP* 6:701-02). The connection of Samson with martyrdom is reinforced by Manoa's burial plan:

> Let us go find the body where it lies
> Sok't in his enemies blood, and from the stream
> With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off
> The clotted gore. I with what speed the while
> (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)
> Will send for all my kindred, all my friends
> To fetch him hence and solemnly attend
> With silent obsequie and funeral train
> Home to his Fathers house: there will I build him
> A Monument, and plant it round with shade
> Of Laurel ever green, and branching Palm,[93]
> With all his Trophies hung, and Acts enroll'd
> In copious Legend, or sweet Lyric Song. (1718-1737)

[93] In Christian iconography, martyrs are crowned with laurel and carry palm fronds. One example from Milton's era is Rubens' *The Martyrdom of St Livinus* (1633).

What is born from the ruins of the Philistine theatre is not the mythical phoenix sung by the semichorus (1699-1707) but rather a paradoxical phenomenon that now seems all too familiar: the martyr avenger/suicide terrorist. The theodicy of the poem is bleak: the chosen people will prosper if they are willing to bear witness to the glory of God by whatever means necessary, often in the absence of a directive or against the letter of the Law. This may seem like a recipe for endless war rather than redemption, but we must remember that Samson and the Hebrews are, in Milton's view, without the light of the Gospel. Still, even in *The Christian Doctrine,* Milton accounts it "a religious duty" to "hate the enemies of God or of the church" (*YP* 6:743).

Since the Argument to *Samson Agonistes* was published in the first issue, reader response might not have played a significant role in its composition. Conversely, the Argument to *Paradise Lost* debuted a year after the text. Even if, as Gilbert suspects, Milton simply revised an existing outline, this redaction was informed by feedback unavailable to him when he drafted the poem. Furthermore, the form provided him with an opportunity to gloss without seeming to gloss, because in the Renaissance a summary of a text was conceived as existing *prior* to that text. The writing process taught in classrooms emulated the first three parts of classical rhetoric: *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio*. After settling on the elements of a discourse (invention), a writer would arrange (dispose) them and then add stylish expression (elocution). Arguments resemble the outlines or summaries produced during the second stage of this process. In a Ramist exercise known as logical analysis, students learned to decipher the elements and arrangement of a discourse from a written exemplar. Presumably, diligent students

would end up with roughly the *same* notes that the author had generated while writing the exemplar. Such reversibility was possible, Ramus thought, because only an undisciplined writer would lose sight of the original plan and invent and dispose during elocution.[94] Especially for longer works such as *Paradise Lost*, however, this understanding of the writing process seems unrealistic. If indeed he was working from an outline, Milton probably found himself straying from it whenever his imagination pointed elsewhere.

The Argument affords us a glimpse of both his opening agenda and his closing remarks. From the Argument of Book One (Figures 8-9), a record of the poem's early reception emerges. Not only proper nouns, but also connective words and even whole sentences are in non-italic Roman. One of these sentences is in parentheses (as it seems they all might have been), and the summary reads intelligibly without them. Hale observes that the "plot-summary" is set forth in italic and the commentary in Roman.[95] Technically speaking, however, a plot is "the events of a story in their causal arrangement."[96] Since the event that sets the others in motion—the first exaltation of the Son—is not related until Book Five, it is impossible to divide up a plot-summary of the epic by book. Rather the portions in italic provide a narrative summary, itself a diegesis, while those in Roman present an exegesis of both the summary and the poem. In the other eleven Arguments, however, only the proper nouns are not italicized, and this type of exegesis—or gloss—ceases.

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[94] See Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, 263-267.

[95] "The 1668 Argument to *Paradise Lost*," 88-89.

[96] Laura Wadenpfuhl, "Glossary," in *Narrative/Theory*, ed. David H. Richter (White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers, 1996), 328.

The Argument of Book One, therefore, approaches us differently than the others. It introduces not only a *para-narrative* (THE ARGUMENT), but also the narrative(s) of the poem. Consequently, our first encounter with *Paradise Lost* is mediated through prose instead of blank verse: "The first Book proposes, first in brief, the whole Subject." Whereas in the exordium to Book One (1-49), the poet refers to "this great Argument" (24), here Milton prefers the less overtly self-referential "Subject." He then lists the themes proposed to the muses in the exordium. In doing so, however, he elects not to mention the muses themselves, who are banished from the Argument along with most of the epic's other mythological figures. Milton claims no divine inspiration for the poem; neither does he describe its project as a theodicy. Instead, he subtly establishes the theological framework on which the theodicy depends.

In many ways, the Argument and exordium to Book One figure as dueling prefaces, the former checking the latter's ebullience. Stella P. Revard finds that Milton's exordiums (which she terms *proemia*) emulate Hesiod and Pindar rather than Homer or Vergil: "The *proemium* to Book One of *Paradise Lost* contains the three essential elements of classical ode—invocation, digression, and prayer. In it Milton lets fall his first and perhaps only allusion to Hesiod as a classical model."[97] Revard compares the autobiographical digressions in Milton and Hesiod's *proemia*, drawing a parallel between the Hebraic shepherd (Moses) "who first taught the chosen Seed, / In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth / Rose out of Chaos" (8-10) and the Hellenic shepherd (Hesiod) who sang "how at the first gods and earth came to be, and rivers, and the boundless sea

[97] "Milton and the Progress of the Epic Proemium," *Milton Studies* 38 (2000): 127.

with its raging swell, and the gleaming stars, and the wide heaven above, and the gods who were born of them" (104-115).[98] Whereas for Hesiod and the ancient Greeks, cosmogony and theogony were one subject, Milton separates them chronologically, spatially, and essentially. The Argument of Book One contains three glosses in which an authoritative voice speaks directly to the reader about theogonical and cosmogonical issues underlying the narrative.

The glosses not only enhance the Argument's intelligibility, they orient readers who might otherwise become lost in the poem's unfamiliar terrain. In the first gloss, Milton certifies that the poem begins *in medias res*: "the Poem hasts into the midst of things." But then, apprehending that "the midst of things" could refer to the *place* in addition to the chronology of the narrative, he adds, "describ'd here, *not in the Center* (for Heaven and Earth may be suppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accurst)." The parenthesis explains that the seat of a pre-existent Hell could not be in the center of the Earth—the poem does not do so until line 650—but it also refers to a nascent heaven that cannot be the one from which Satan and his legions fell. Without resolving this inconsistency, the para-narrator reveals that Hell lies "*in a place of utter darkness, fitliest call'd* Chaos."[99] The concept of Chaos is so fundamental to *Paradise Lost* that it is difficult to fathom how Revard could find only one allusion to Hesiod in the poem.

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[98] *Hesiod: the Homeric hymns, and Homerica / with an English translation by Hugh. G. Evelyn-White* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1967).

[99] Milton yokes together Christian and pagan allusions: "utter darkness" paraphrases "outer darkness" (Matt. 25:30); "fitliest call'd Chaos" translates Ovid's "quem dixere chaos" (*Metamorphoses* 1.7). See *Ovid's Metamorphoses, Translated into English Prose...with the Latin Text and Order of Construction on the same Page*, 4th ed. (London, 1797), 2.

Milton's rejection of creation *ex nihilo* was inspired in large part by *The Theogony*, wherein Chaos is a dim, formless substance predating and possibly producing the forms and elements of matter, such as Earth and Tartarus (the underworld to which the Titans were condemned). In an attempt to convey the depth and duration of the Titans' plummet through Chaos, Hesiod relates how an anvil dropped from Heaven would fall nine days and nights before reaching Earth, while an anvil dropped from Earth would fall nine days and nights before reaching Tartarus (726-30). Similarly, Satan and the rebel angels fall nine days and nights from Heaven (6.871), only to roil nine more days and nights on the "fiery gulf" of Hell (1.50-2).

Milton's first published conflation of Hell and Tartarus appears in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644), where he cites pagans who hold that the hell of a sinner's own depravity is more fitting than "a local hell, whether in the air or in the centre, or in that uttermost or bottomless gulph of *Chaos*, deeper from holy bliss than the world's diameter multiplied" (*YP* 2:294). Two decades later, he would create a remote Hell "As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n / As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole" (1.73-74). No matter which end of the cosmic axis one envisions as "th' utmost pole," these measurements conform to Vergil's relative distances (*Aeneid* 6.577). By the time Satan rouses, the universe or world ("Heaven and Earth") mentioned in the parenthesis has been created. But it has yet to be cursed by God as a result of original sin, and Hell is twice as far from Earth ("the Center") as Earth from the celestial Heaven. In *The Christian Doctrine,* Milton makes a similar case against a terrestrial Hell: "it does not seem probable that hell should have been prepared within the limits of this world, in

the bowels of the earth, on which the curse had not as yet passed. This is said to have been the opinion of Chrysostom, as likewise of Luther and some later divines" (*YP* 6:629-31). Milton's authorities are vague on the issue of Hell's location, however, and others contradict him. Although Irenaeus and Novatian describe Hell as *infraterram*, or as Milton puts it, "under Earth" (3.322), they were thinking in terms of the Southern Hemisphere or antipodes. After science and exploration disproved their idea, consensus formed around the subterranean Hell of Tertullian and Jerome.[100] Dante exemplifies this tradition, positioning Satan at the center of the Earth and the Ptolemaic system. Accounts of exotic lands adduced volcanic and geyseric activity as evidence for this theory, and even Milton utilizes the association as a metaphor: "a black bituminous gurge / Boiles out from under ground, the mouth of Hell" (12.41-42). In *Davideis*, Cowley also situates Hell at the center of the Earth, but insists that "it is not so strait, as that *crowding* and sweating should be one of the *torments* of it" (1.11n).

For Milton, the *poena damni*, or pain of loss, is the primary torment of the damned (*YP* 6:628), as the Argument of Book One emphasizes: "*To these* Satan *directs his Speech*, *comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new World and new kind of Creature to be created, according to an ancient Prophesie or report in Heaven*." At this point he digresses for the third and last time, noting that the idea "that Angels were long before this visible Creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers." This observation clarifies that the "Heaven and Earth" mentioned in the parenthesis is a "visible creation" posterior to the "invisible creation" of Heaven, Hell,

[100] Peter King, *The History of the Apostles Creed: With Critical Observations on Its Several Articles*, 4th ed. (London: W. B. for J. Wyat, 1719), 230.

and the angels—a matter that the poem does not resolve until Book Two. This final gloss also jibes with *The Christian Doctrine* on a matter of angelology: "Many at least of the Greek, and some of the Latin fathers, are of opinion that angels, as being spirits, must have existed long before the material word; and it seems even probable, that the apostasy which caused the expulsion of so many thousands from heaven, took place before the foundations of this world were laid" (*YP* 6:312-315). Though Milton may have had support from the ancients, most of his contemporaries held that the angels were made on one of the six days of the biblical creation.[101] Precisely which day was a matter of debate, however. In his encyclopedic *Speculum Mundi* (1635), John Swan argues against those who understand the first day's light as a spiritual light comprehending the creation of the Angels:

> it is not like[ly] that they were made this first day, but on the fourth day: For it is very probable that there was the like order observed in making of the invisible world, which was in the visible; and that on the second day, not onely the visible, but also the invisible heavens were created; yet so as both of them remained as it were unpolished or unfinished until the fourth day: for then as the outward heavens were garnished with starres, so might the inward and highest heavens be beautified with Angels. (53-54)

[101] Greek fathers who shared Milton's view include Origen, Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil, and Chrysostom (Leonard, *John Milton: The Complete Poems*, 712). Of the Latin fathers, Jerome followed the Greeks on the issue, while Augustine and others remained noncommittal. Aquinas and the scholastics demurred, arguing for a single creation, and Dante followed them, as did Calvin and other reformers. See Benjamin B. Warfield, "Calvin's Doctrine of Creation," *The Princeton Theological Review* 13, no. 2 (1915): 216-218.

For many seventeenth-century readers, the story of the invisible creation was coded into the biblical account of the visible creation, either literally or allegorically, and both processes took place over the same period of time if not in the same space. In separating theogony from cosmogony, Milton makes Chapter One of *Genesis* less abstruse, but Book One of his own poem more challenging. The three exegetical glosses embedded in the Argument of Book One smooth the way through the poem's thorny heterodoxy for readers educated enough to have opinions on such matters.

Eighteenth-century scholars regarded the Argument to *Paradise Lost* as a valuable aid to memory and comprehension. In 1740, Francis Peck epitomized *Paradise Regained* with the following justification: "The Paradise Lost being sent into the world with prose arguments, of our author's own writing, at the head of each book, & The Paradise Regain'd appearing without any (which is some disadvantage to it) I shall endeavor to supply that defect, & here give the argument of the whole."[102] Today, Peck's notion that the poem is defective without a synopsis, no less than his attempt to furnish posterity with *the* missing Argument, will strike many of us as mystifying. Peck evinces "the heresy of Argument," the belief that a narrative or dramatic poem contains an extractable summary that pre-exists it. In the final section, I will explore the extent to which Milton Studies has drifted toward the opposite view, granting critics a license to disregard Milton's Arguments and even to downplay the importance of his prose works to scholarly interpretation of his poetry.

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[102] *New Memoirs of the Life and Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton*… (London, 1740), 70. Charles Dunster supplied even longer summaries in Dunster, ed., *Paradise Regained a poem by John Milton, with notes of various authors* (London, 1795).

STATE OF THE ARGUMENT

When the narrator of *Paradise Lost* refers to "this great Argument" (1.24), he means the subject matter of the poem (i.e., the fall and promised salvation of man).[103] But for some Miltonists, the phrase also includes his proposal to "assert Eternal Providence, / And justifie the wayes of God to men" (1.25-26).[104] In the first and second editions of the poem, the word *argument* appears in upper case when it signifies a subject or theme, and in lower case when the usage is less archaic (e.g., a "line of reasoning" or a "debate").[105] Studies of the poem's early reception reveal that its Argument was controversial in itself.[106] Over the next three centuries, however, Milton's argument, not his Argument, became the primary ground of contention. Now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, critics are beginning to question whether the poem advances an argument at all. Before detailing this ongoing reassessment, I will examine the tradition from which it derives as well as that from which it most radically departs.

The latter tradition, which regards Milton's poetry and prose as rhetorically consistent, is embodied most obviously by Maurice Kelley's *This Great Argument; A Study of Milton's "De Doctrina Christiana" as a Gloss Upon "Paradise Lost"* (1941). The title nominally fuses the epic and the treatise—as Kelley literally does in the

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[103] Argument: "Subject-matter of discussion or discourse in speech or writing; theme, subject. *Obs*. or *arch*" (OED 6).

[104] See, for example, Dennis H. Burden, *The Logical Epic; a Study of the Argument of "Paradise Lost"* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); John Siemon Diekhoff, *Milton's "Paradise Lost," a Commentary on the Argument* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946).

[105] None of Milton's other poems follow this typographical convention.

[106] See Nicholas von Maltzahn, "The First Reception of *Paradise Lost* (1667)," *The Review of English Studies* 47 (November 1996): 479-99.

monograph. Kelley concludes that the works were composed over the same period by the same author making the same claims and therefore "*De doctrina* should be decisive in any question of interpreting Milton's epic."[107] But if *Paradise Lost* bears such a strong affinity to the blatantly heterodox treatise, which was discovered in 1823, one wonders why the majority of the poem's readers have considered it orthodox. Balachandra Rajan argues that differences in genre and medium account for differences in the reception of doctrinally identical content: "Collate *Paradise Lost* with the 'De Doctrina' and it is Arian. It could hardly be otherwise in the nature of Milton's integrity. But read it as it was meant to be read, by itself, as an epic poem, not a systematic theology, and the heresy fades in a background of incantation."[108] Rajan's notion that *Paradise Lost* was "meant to be read by itself" probably stems from its lack of annotation. But the epistle to the reader of *The Christian Doctrine* confirms that, under safer circumstances, Milton would have shared his "dearest and best possession with as many people as possible" (*YP* 6:121). Presumably, Milton would not have been shocked to find some of those people reading the treatise alongside the poem.

Prior to the publication of the treatise in 1825, however, the prose Argument to *Paradise Lost* was the only authorial guide available to readers, ensuring that they would never have to read the poem "by itself." As I have shown, the summaries skirt the tendentious doctrinal points asserted boldly in the treatise and discreetly in the poem. At

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[107] *This Great Argument; a Study of Milton's "De Doctrina Christiana" as a Gloss Upon "Paradise Lost"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1941), 7.

[108] *"Paradise Lost" & the Seventeenth Century Reader* (1947; repr. London: Chatto & Windus, 1962), 25.

the same time, they explain and underscore matters critical to the poem's theodicy. This strategy may well have been an intervention—from its first appearance the poem has provoked reader responses contradictory to aspects of its theodicy. Dryden, Blake, and Shelley famously observed that Satan is the real hero of the poem.[109] A. J. A. Waldock determined that the fall of humanity was not a good Argument for God and especially not for Milton, whose passions find outlets in Satan, Adam, and Eve.[110] William Empson pushed Waldock's thesis once step further, contending that the Christian God is unjustifiable and that Milton was desperately trying to make the best of recalcitrant material: "He is struggling to make his God appear less wicked, as he tells us he will at the start (I.25), and does succeed in making him noticeably less wicked than the traditional Christian one."[111]

For the poets and critics of this alternative tradition, *Paradise Lost* is a glorious failure that stands apart from Milton's prose. Empson maintains that the poem should be assessed by other criteria than the degree to which it persuades readers to accept or reject a particular argument, if for no other reason than that readers in different cultures and time periods will have different responses.[112] This position makes good sense; after all,

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[109] In the dedication to *The Aeneis* (1697), plate 6 of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790), and the preface to *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), respectively. For additional responses in this vein, see Calvin Huckaby, "The Satanist Controversy of the Nineteenth Century," *Studies in English Renaissance Literature*, ed. Waldo F. McNeir (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), 197-210; John T. Shawcross, "An Early View of Satan as Hero of *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (October 1998): 104-105.

[110] *"Paradise Lost" and Its Critics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1947), 17-24.

[111] *Milton's God* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), 11.

[112] Ibid., 9-34.

to to be considered a great epic, Milton's poem need no more convince readers of its thesis than the *Aeneid* needs to convince readers of the legitimacy of imperialism. But many Miltonists refuse to accept Empson's terms, to say nothing of his indictment of Milton's God. Even Alastair Fowler, who has labored to reveal the structural and symbolic richness of *Paradise Lost*, contends that "if one is left at the end in any doubt as to God's justice and love, the poem has failed, not on a single count, but altogether."[113] Stanley Fish argues that the responses of Waldock and Empson are typical of modern secular readers who fall for the temptations Milton planted in the poem while resisting his correctives: the poem is designed to make "cold Christians" confront their own fallen nature(s).[114] Christopher Hill finds that the inconsistencies harped on by Waldock and Empson can be explained by historical study:

> *Paradise Lost* is a poem, not a historical document. The surface meaning is not necessarily to be taken at its face value, as though it were a series of statements in prose…But *Paradise Lost* should not be taken out of history. It is possible simply by 'reading the poem' to find in it meanings which seem unlikely to have been intended by Milton…Our problem is to decide whether Milton *had* intentions other than his professed aim of justifying the ways of God to men.[115]

Hill, unlike Empson, decides that Milton indeed had other intentions. On this point he agrees with Fish, but whereas Fish finds a monist and antinomian philosophy underlying

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[113] Fowler, ed., *Milton: Paradise Lost*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1998), 39.

[114] *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in* "*Paradise Lost*," 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 44-47.

[115] *Milton and the English Revolution*, 354.

Milton's theodicy, Hill discovers political allusions beneath "the surface meaning."[116] According to Hill, Milton often deploys fallen characters as mouthpieces for his more provocative views, a practice that explains many of the poem's apparent inconsistencies with his prose. Fish also sees a unity of purpose in Milton's diverse writings: "This is what Milton does both *in* his poetry and prose and *with* his poetry and prose."[117]

Today, an increasing number of Miltonists reject such totalizing paradigms and instead articulate fundamental differences between Milton's poetry and prose. Critics such as Peter Herman, Lucy Newlyn, Elizabeth Sauer, and Joseph Wittreich read his later poems as sites of ideological conflict where orthodoxies and heterodoxies collide. Following in Empson's footsteps, these critics view the Restoration as a turning point in Milton's thought and find his poetry most interesting and agreeable when it "repeals traditions and voids convention" or reveals truths that are "plural not singular."[118] Herman argues that "in the aftermath of the Revolution, the critical sensibility that Milton championed throughout his career led him to engage in a wholesale questioning of just about everything he had argued for in his earlier prose works, and *he does not come to a conclusion*."[119] Wittreich detects a tactic of ambiguity rather than a crisis of incertitude: "to move from Milton's prose writing to his last poems is to move not from politics to poetry but from the writings of a feisty polemicist to those of a wily politician who knows

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[116] Ibid., 365-412.

[117] *How Milton Works*, 572.

[118] Joseph Wittreich, "Joseph Wittreich on Why Milton Matters," *Milton Studies* 44 (2005): 34.

[119] *Destabilizing Milton: "Paradise Lost" And the Poetics of Incertitude* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 21.

that inscribing contradictions leads to debating alternatives—a debate, in turn, that witnesses to the positive potentiality of controversy."[120] Wittreich calls for a corresponding movement in Milton criticism, which "instead of confronting opposing points of view in order to silence one of them, might be empowered and emboldened by competing interpretations to produce finer honings of its own (not always fully nuanced) readings."[121] In his own readings of *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*, Wittreich discovers feminist and pacifist retellings of the biblical myths.[122]

For Fish, this recent trend in Milton criticism reveals the influence of liberal humanism on academic culture: "The idea is that despite aspects of his theology and ethics that seem unyielding and ungenerous, Milton is really a good hearted celebrator of difference, and a proto-postmodernist to boot. Accordingly he is not doing anything so crude as urging one perspective at the expense of others."[123] What Milton is really doing, argues Fish, is preaching "that obedience to God is the prime and trumping value in every situation."[124] This directive is not quite as straightforward as Addison's: "*that Obedience to the Will of God makes Men happy, and that Disobedience makes them miserable.*"[125]

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[120] "Milton's Transgressive Maneuvers," in *Milton and Heresy*, ed. Stephen B. Dobranski and John P. Rumrich (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 260.

[121] Ibid., 261.

[122] See, for example, *Feminist Milton* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); *Interpreting "Samson Agonistes"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[123] "Preface to the Second Edition," *Surprised by Sin*, xli.

[124] *How Milton Works*, 5.

[125] *Spectator*, No. 369, 3 May 1712. Reprinted in John T. Shawcross, *Milton: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1970), 219.

In Milton's antinomian epistemology, argues Fish, the will of God cannot be established on the basis of external evidence – all interpretations are made, rather, on the basis of internal convictions for which external evidence is fashioned, not discovered, as proof. [126] By ascribing to Milton his own reader-response theory, Fish succumbs, like all those liberal humanist academics, to the temptation of conflating himself with Milton. He then applies his thesis to Milton's characters and readers alike: only those blessed with the right conception of God can understand His ways, and only those blessed with the right conception of Milton can understand his texts. [127] Fish freely confesses that, like other critics, he has no way of knowing whether or not his own reading of *Paradise Lost* is the correct one: "In the absence of any formal mechanism by which to adjudicate interpretive alternatives—in the poem or about the poem—we are all in the same endless game, reading an inside which, rather than being confirmed by an outside, generates it."[128]

Fish and other critics may have overlooked one such "formal mechanism"—the Argument to *Paradise Lost*. Perhaps Milton's early readers desired it as a means "by which to adjudicate interpretive alternatives." If, as Herman attests, the history of *Paradise Lost* criticism is almost entirely comprised of attempts to stabilize an unruly text,[129] then the Argument presents itself as the original and peremptory stabilizer. Its single authoritative voice does no justice to the arguments of Satan and his fellows, nor to

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[126] *How Milton Works*, 5-6.

[127] Fish defends this signature maneuver in his "Preface to the Second Edition," *Surprised by Sin*, lxiv-lxvi.

[128] *How Milton Works*, 104.

[129] *Destabilizing Milton*, 14-21.

those of Adam and Eve. In this respect, it offers a challenge to a critic like Newlyn, who argues that Milton airs conflicting views in the poem so that readers may either decide among them based on their own subjective responses or, ideally, hold them "in tension" without seeking resolution.[130] Newlyn discovers a Romantic aesthetic in *Paradise Lost*, a Keatsian negative capability.[131] Not only does this notion of how Milton works fly in the face of our received history of ideas, it also lacks support from his prose, wherein he tends to advocate tolerance as a matter of public policy but never embraces moral relativism. The brute fact of the Argument's physical incorporation with the poem makes the critical separation of Milton's poetry and prose more difficult to achieve, especially in light of the historical milieu from which they emerged. Ong explains that

> The adversary procedures suggested by Milton's announced purpose in his greatest epic, "to justifie the ways of God to men," reflect the polemical educational heritage, as does much else in *Paradise Lost*, as for example the heading "The Argument" that labels the prose summary prefixed by Milton to each book. "Argument" had been partly neutralized and had come to mean something like what we mean by "summary" today, but not quite, for it was never entirely divested of its original polemic overtones. In his poem Milton intended to prove something and show that others were wrong. All speech, poetry included, was assumed to be probatory or disprobatory unless there were positive indications to the contrary—as there almost never were. (*YP* 8:160).

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[130] *"Paradise Lost" and the Romantic Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 66.

[131] Ibid., 68. In light of the similarities in their own approaches to Milton, it is interesting to note that Empson, Newlyn, and Wittreich have all studied Romantic approaches to Milton.

The last sentence of this passage echoes Hill's contention that Milton "followed the English school of Ramists in believing that poets and orators were both employing rhetoric; only the words were organized in a different way."[132] Indeed, orators often distributed "act verses," or poetic reductions of their theses, before their disputations.[133] Yet Ong and Hill overstate the case: Milton considered poetry better suited to address the timeless and universal, oratory the topical and specific. In his first *Prolusion*, for example, he declares that "The subject [whether day or night is the more excellent] seems to suit a poetical performance better than it does an oratorical competition" (*YP* 1:211).

Neither orations nor poems, Milton's summaries arbitrate between competing viewpoints. This opposition, when not checked against the Argument, conveys the mistaken sense of openness that some critics hold in contradistinction to his prose. In some of Milton's other poems, however, dialectical synthesis is the desired effect. The stalemate between *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, for example, reflects Milton's oratorical training at Cambridge, where he was sometimes required to argue both sides of a question (*dissoi logoi*). When composing his epic, therefore, Milton was fully prepared to play devil's advocate, to permit his fallen characters to speak at length and make persuasive arguments. To do otherwise would be to tacitly acknowledge a weakness in his theodicy or, in Hill's account, to undermine covert political statements. Milton may have expected readers to grant more authority to divine reasons and testimonies than human or demonic ones, but post-Enlightenment readers have not been so inclined.

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[132] *Milton and the English Revolution*, 403.

[133] John K. Hale, *Milton's Cambridge Latin*: *Performing in the Genres 1625-1632* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 33.

Consequently, *Paradise Lost* remains a site of contestation for its characters and its critics. Although some critics consider themselves to be engaged in a "conversation" rather than a contest, individual voices can be fairly agonistic. Fish describes his own interpretation as a "contender for the prize of saying what *Paradise Lost* really means."[134]

The Argument to *Paradise Lost* is one more contender for that prize, but it clarifies authorial intention rather than meaning, which depends upon the reader. Fish, like other theoretical pragmatists, confounds meaning and intention, arguing that "one cannot construe sense without assigning intention."[135] Whereas Empson, Waldock, and the Romantic poets recognized that the meanings they found in the poem were not always those Milton set out to communicate, Fish asserts that his interpretation corresponds to the intended meaning. Ironically, critics who claim to be following in the footsteps of Empson play by Fish's rules. Michael Bryson, for example, argues that Milton *intentionally* portrays God as a tyrant to encourage readers to reject the conventional vision of divine kingship.[136] Fish's example has made it fashionable for critics to bring Milton's intention into alignment with their own readings of the poems, rather than the other way around.

The fact that the poems are open to a variety of interpretations does not grant scholars a license to disregard proof of authorial intention. The Miltonic Arguments

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[134] *Surprised by Sin*, lx.

[135] *Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 127. On the meaning-intention debate, see W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *Against Theory: Literary Studies and the New Pragmatism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

[136] *The Tyranny of Heaven: Milton's Rejection of God as King* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2004).

represent unique evidence of the readings that Milton expected his readers to come away with. Should they find this evidence contradicted by the poems or reader responses, critics have a responsibility to document and discuss the disagreements they discover. Unfortunately, even critics attempting to uncover authorial intentions or historical receptions tend to ignore or overlook the Arguments. Sauer, for example, in her otherwise excellent study of "the relative status and authority of the narrative voices in *Paradise Lost*,"[137] neglects to consider the narrative voice of its Argument. This oversight leads her to oversimplify the reading experience as well as the division between Milton's "monologic" prose and "dialogic" poetry.

My goal in this chapter has not been to assert that the Argument to *Paradise Lost*, for example, ought to replace *The Christian Doctrine* as the gloss that "should be decisive in any question of interpreting Milton's epic." Empson contends, *pace* Kelley, that the epic qualifies the theology of the treatise, not the other way around, and a similar debate can and should rage around the question of the Argument's relationship to the poem. If nothing else, the Miltonic Arguments serve as a reminder that the poems have arguments, in more than one sense, despite claims to the contrary by proponents of the "New Milton Criticism." Perhaps even more importantly, the Arguments mark the poems as products of an age of logic wherein the conventional ways of reading, writing, and thinking about synopses were different from our own.

[137] *Barbarous Dissonance and Images of Voice in Milton's Epics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 3.

Chapter 3: From Apparatus to Archive

In 1705, Jacob Tonson dedicated the seventh edition of *Paradise Lost* "To the Right Honourable John Lord Sommers, Baron of Evasham":

> IT was Your Lordship's Opinion and Encouragement that occasion'd the First Appearing of this Poem in the *Folio* Edition, which from thence has been so well receiv'd, that notwithstanding the Price of it was Four times greater than before, the sale encreas'd double the Number every Year. The Work is now generally known and esteem'd; and I having the Honour to hear your Lordship say, that a smaller Edition of it would be grateful to the World, immediately resolv'd upon Printing it in this Volume, of which I most humbly beg your Acceptance, from, *My LORD, Your Lordship's Ever Obliged Servant.* (Alr-v)

Although this dedicatory epistle provides the historian of the book with valuable information concerning the work's trajectory into the eighteenth century, like most specimens of its kind it probably exaggerates the role of patronage and minimizes financial motivations. Somers had indeed helped Tonson solicit subscribers to the fourth edition of 1688, an illustrated folio, but Moyles and other textual scholars believe that Tonson masterminded the project.[1] This was the first of over thirty books that Tonson financed through advance subscription, a system that he perfected. Ironically, it was also a system that ruined the publisher of the first three editions, Samuel Simmons, who grossly under-estimated the capital required to produce a two-volume folio of Joseph

[1] Moyles, *The Text of Paradise Lost*, 34.

Caryl's *Exposition Upon Job* (1677). This debacle forced him to sell the copyright to *Paradise Lost* to Brabazon Aylmer, from whom Tonson purchased it.[2] Tonson was a bookseller, not a printer, and therefore his gamble on a folio of a work that had sold fewer than 4000 copies entailed less financial risk for him than it would have for Simmons. As "Dryden's publisher," Tonson also had better connections among the literati.[3] By 1705, Tonson had published three folios of *Paradise Lost*, which probably exhausted the pool of potential subscribers, if not the market. Even though he was wealthy enough to finance another folio himself, he decided instead to experiment with a less expensive octavo. In crediting Somers with the idea that a smaller edition "would be grateful to the world" (and hence Tonson's pocketbook), he neglects to mention that the 1674 edition, in which form Milton left the poem to the world, is also an octavo.

After absorbing the content of Tonson's epistle, scholars tend to ignore its transmission history. This indefatigable message survived both the sender and the recipient,[4] reappearing in six Tonson editions between 1707 and 1730 as well as a pirate edition printed in Dublin (1724), a "London stationer's" edition (1739), and two Scots editions (1746). Directly following the title pages of these books, the epistle notifies readers in advance of the negligence of those responsible for updating and maintaining the interface through which the text was returned to the masses. Yet its tenure also bespeaks the protocols of supplementation in the first half of the eighteenth century. In

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[2] Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, 2:109-109.

[3] On Tonson's involvement with Dryden, Whig intellectuals, and the Kit-Kat Club, see Kathleen M. Lynch, *Jacob Tonson: Kit-Kat Publisher* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971).

[4] Somers died in 1716; Tonson in 1736.

assembling a new edition, compositors were loath to remove an element from the previous one—even if reducing the format—unless they had a suitable replacement. In his duodecimo editions of *Paradise Lost*, for example, Tonson opted to use smaller type rather than sacrifice such features as the 40-page "Index," added in 1711, or the 27-page "Life of Mr. John Milton," added in 1725. Although he had the 1688 illustrations re-engraved in 1705 and 1725, he recycled the deteriorating plates through multiple editions.

A notable exception to the rule of interfacial non-subtraction was Patrick Hume's *Annotations on Milton's "Paradise Lost"* (1695), which accompanied the epic in *The Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton* (1695) but resurfaced in no subsequent edition.[5] In this 321 page supplement, we are told, "The Texts of Sacred Writ related to the POEM, are quoted; The Parallel Places and Imitations of the most Excellent *Homer* and *Virgil*, cited and compared; All the Obscure Parts render'd in Phrases more familiar; The Old and Obsolete words, with their Originals, Explained and made Easie to the English Reader" (A1r). Although these objectives target an audience of modest education, Hume's notes are often arcane, etymologizing words down to their roots and finding allusions to many more sources than just the bible, Homer, and Virgil. Furthermore, Tonson published the work exclusively in the 1695 *Poetical Works*, a luxury item.[6] Hume's unprecedented project, therefore, ultimately served to solidify Milton's reputation among the elite, not to make his epic accessible to the public.

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[5] The title page of the commentary names only "P.H., Philopoiêtês." Jonathan Richardson identified him as Patrick Hume in 1734; see Darbishire, ed., *Early Lives of Milton*, 294.

[6] Hume's *Annotations* sometimes appears outside the *Poetical Works*, leading some scholars to believe that Tonson also published the commentary separately. But such copies were probably re-bound in order to reduce the size of the *Poetical Works*, a volume of nearly 1,000 pages.

Tonson's popular editions suffered from a more pressing problem than the lack of an explanatory apparatus, however. The text was deteriorating through frequent and careless transmission. Textual corruption was almost inevitable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when scholars rarely turned their attention to vernacular literature. With few exceptions, it fell to printers and publishers to make decisions about how texts were to be prepared for each new edition. Typically, they elected to reset the text of the previous edition and emend any obvious errors. In 1719, however, Tonson began hiring editors to "correct" the text.[7] Unfortunately, most of these early editors practiced *divinatio*, or conjectural emendation, instead of referring to the two editions published during Milton's lifetime. To make matters worse, Richard Bentley, the foremost classical scholar in England, claimed that an anonymous editor had interpolated forgeries into these two authoritative editions. This editorial interference, Bentley reasoned, eliminates the possibility for objective reconstruction of the text.

In his edition of 1732, Bentley proposed over eight hundred emendations and recommended that several passages be expurgated. Although some of his contemporaries tried to defend the edition, Bentley and the "conjectural" school of textual criticism he had spearheaded at Cambridge were savaged in periodicals such as *The Grub-street Journal* and pamphlets such as Swift's *Milton Restor'd and Bentley Depos'd* (1732).[8] It is now almost universally agreed that the bulk of Bentley's emendations reflect his own

[7] He may have done so earlier, for the first editor that we can attach with any certainty to *Paradise Lost*, John Hughes, revealed in a letter to Tonson that he had edited the 1719 edition anonymously. See Moyles, *The Text of Paradise Lost*, 49.

[8] For an overview of this controversy, see Ants Oras, *Milton's Editors and Commentators from Patrick Hume to Henry John Todd* (New York: Haskell House, 1964), 75-81.

neoclassical prejudices and that the anonymous editor who so grievously exploited Milton's condition is Bentley's own invention. This motiveless phantom has often been figured as a doppelganger of Bentley himself, despite the fact that the latter may have had a variety of motives (both noble and self-serving) for taking on the project.

To his credit, Bentley separated his emendations from the text: "not ONE word being alter'd in it; but all the Conjectures, that attempt a Restoration of the Genuine Milton, cast into the Margin, and explain'd in the notes. So that every Reader has his free Choice, whether he will accept or reject what is here offer'd him."[9] This system appears quite reasonable (Figure 20), especially in light of the fact that Elijah Fenton, a Bentley disciple who edited the three previous editions of the poem, had silently inserted several emendations. Dean Swift, however, was quick to recognize the temporary nature of such editorial restraint, as well as the likelihood that the conjectural approach would lead to multiple competing texts:

> The same Liberty may be assumed by every Reader, as by you, Doctor; and so the whole of Milton's or any other Poem, extinguished by degrees, and a new one set forth by Editors, challenge the title not of Notes, but of a Text *variorum*. To regulate the Work of a deceased Author from various Readings in Manuscripts or printed Copies is a laborious but useful Undertaking: But this way of restoring, i.e. interpolating by Guess, is so sacralegious an intrusion, that, as it had its Rise, so is it hoped it will have its Fall with you.[10]

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[9] Richard Bentley, ed., *Milton's Paradise lost. A New Edition* (London, 1732), 1:a1v.

[10] Jonathan Swift, *Milton Restor'd, and Bentley Depos'd* (London: E. Curll, 1732), vii-viii.

Swift's fear of a "Text *variorum*" proved unwarranted; indeed, the outrage over Bentley's intrusion probably accelerated the production of a definitive text, in the form of Thomas Newton's edition (1749).[11] Thanks to Newton's careful collation of the authoritative documents, the text of *Paradise Lost* has remained fairly stable for over 250 years—at least with regard to the substantives.[12] Like Newton, most modern editors base their texts on the second edition of 1674 and adopt some of the 40 or so variant readings found in the first edition of 1667 and the Book One manuscript.[13] Despite the modernity of his editorial procedures, however, Newton failed to present future scholars with an *apparatus criticus* that lists his emendations and provides a "historical collation" or itemization of variants. His commentary on textual details is incorporated within a massive apparatus of variorum footnotes, the sheer bulk of which threatens to force the text itself off the page (Figure 21). The preponderance of these notes are explanatory rather than textual, offering insights from Newton, his collaborators, and previous commentators such as Hume, Addison, Peck, and the Richardsons.[14]

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[11] For this theory, see especially Moyles, *The Text of Paradise Lost*, 59.

[12] W.W. Greg distinguishes between a text's *substantive readings* (usually the words themselves), which "affect the author's meaning or the essence of his expression," and the *accidentals* of formal presentation, such as spelling and punctuation. See "The Rationale of Copy-Text," *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950-51): 21. Because variants in accidentals often create different substantive readings, however, many textual critics prefer to use the more objective term *substantives* when referring to the words of a text (and their order), so as to avoid attributing to them a higher level of significance than the accidentals.

[13] For a detailed discussion of these variants, see Moyles, *The Text of Paradise Lost*, 20-24. The second edition also includes fifteen new lines, nine of which were added to facilitate the move from ten to twelve books.

[14] See Oras, *Milton's Editors and Commentators*, 199-253.

Between 1749 and 1790, Newton's edition was reprinted nine times, in various formats, and sixty other editions copied his text and some of his notes.[15] Newton's variorum commentary reached a wider audience than Hume's *Annotations* because it explicates the style, language, prosody, allusions, and meanings of each passage in a manner intelligible to the general reader. Furthermore, whereas Hume makes no attempt to situate *Paradise Lost* in the context of Milton's life and politics, Newton frequently references Milton's other poems and his more controversial prose works. In 1801, Henry John Todd's variorum edition replaced Newton's as the standard edition, a status it then held for more than fifty years. Todd abridged Newton's apparatus and updated it with commentaries from the latter half of the eighteenth century. After Todd's edition, no more full-fledged variorums appeared, in part because no single volume could hope to do justice to the Milton scholarship emanating from the universities, which were beginning to embrace study of English literature. But the popularity of the two variorums suggests that readers enjoyed comparing different interpretations of the same lines. They may also have found the interface design of these editions appealing. The footnotes represent the text as a fixed, unitary object around which opinion circulates. Conversely, Bentley's interface casts a shroud of uncertainty around the text. Even for those who scoff at his marginalia, they serve as a constant reminder that the words on the page may not always be the same as those the author dictated or his amanuenses recorded. Although Milton's agents were probably more competent and less mischievous than Bentley believes they were, the text still had to go through many hands and minds before reaching print.

[15] Moyles, *The Text of Paradise Lost*, 76.

In the first half of the twentieth century, editors began to call attention to textual problems once again, this time in a more objective fashion. William Aldis Wright, in his edition of the *Poetical Works* (1903), listed the major variants as well as emendations by previous editors. For the most part, however, he left readers to infer his own treatment of the text. With his facsimile *Poetical Works* (1943-48), Harris F. Fletcher filled in the gaps of Wright's collation by recording the minor variants between the authoritative documents as well as between different copies of the first two editions. Because his edition offers photographic reproductions instead of a freshly emended text, however, it should be classified as a *documentary edition* rather than a *critical edition*. Helen Darbishire's *Poetical Works* (1952-55), which combines a critically edited text with a thorough critical apparatus, emerges as the first bona fide critical edition of the poem.

The preceding history reveals a two hundred year gap between the appearance of a reliable text of the poem and a systematic account of its textual variation. The length of this interval supports two generalizations about the transmission of literary works. First, the vast majority of readers, including most scholars, demand only a consistent text and explanatory notes. Second, a critical apparatus of textual notes is not a necessary byproduct of critical editing but rather an evidentiary supplement that renders the process more transparent but also more arduous. For these two reasons, genuine critical editions rarely materialize. Far more common are *practical editions*, which reprint a text and provide an introduction and annotations geared to students and general readers.[16] One

[16] See Fredson Bowers, "Practical Texts and Definitive Editions," in *Two Lectures on Editing*: *Shakespeare and Hawthorne*, ed. Charlton Hinman (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), 21-70.

form of practical edition, the so-called "classroom edition," also tends to include contextual materials and other pedagogically useful supplements. The last several decades have also witnessed the publication of hybrid editions wherein the apparatus resembles that of a practical edition but the text is critically edited rather than reprinted.

Two recent and related movements have prompted editors and publishers to further blur the line between critical and practical editions, this time at the level of apparatus. A groundswell of interest in textual studies and archival research is creating a demand for classroom editions that introduce students to the kinds of issues traditionally confined to the apparatuses of critical editions. A burgeoning field called the "Digital Humanities," meanwhile, is leading an interdisciplinary effort to digitize and encode literary texts and other cultural artifacts for virtual archives that offer a richer and more efficient platform for research than any type of scholarly print edition. The documentary and critical branches of scholarly editing, therefore, are increasingly working in different media. This split means that print-based diplomatic, facsimile, genetic, and synoptic editions will soon be relics of the past. The fault-line also runs through the critical edition, separating text from apparatus. But rumors of "the death of the critical edition" have been greatly exaggerated.[17] Freed of its documentary burden, the print critical edition is not disappearing but rather undergoing a transformation into a more practical and coherent entity. As such, it no longer exhibits the tension inherent in its previous scholarly incarnation, which was forced to serve reading and reference functions equally.

[17] On the traditional critical edition's demise, see Charles L. Ross, "The Electronic Text and the Death of the Critical Edition," in *The Literary Text in the Digital Age*, ed. Richard J. Finneran (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 225-231.

This new breed of critical edition, however, is largely the product of commercial publishing houses whose decision to admit a modicum of textual commentary reflects the changing demands of the market. These publishers have always viewed a critical apparatus as an expenditure of time and money from which they can expect to recoup little return on their investment. Most scholarly editions, therefore, are published by non-profit university presses, which are subsidized by their respective institutions or private endowments. The academy has also assumed the responsibility for the development and maintenance of electronic scholarly editions, which are not only more costly but generate no revenue when they are published online. These editions rely, therefore, not only on institutional support but also on public funding sources and corporate donations.

In most cases, prospective editors of print and electronic scholarly editions must submit proposals to a grant review board or committee. In these proposals, they are often expected to state the editorial principles to which they subscribe and the procedures they plan to follow. For assistance with this statement, they usually refer to guidelines maintained by experts in the field of scholarly editing. In addition to practical advice, however, such guidelines tend to carry the ideological freight of the reigning orthodoxy in Anglo-American editorial theory. In the sections that follow, I will explain how one regime of textual criticism orchestrated this review process in order to privilege critical over documentary editing, discuss a counter-movement's efforts to devise a workable model for a "social-text" edition, and finally reveal the confluence of interest groups presently determining the structure of electronic scholarly editions. I hope to show that the essential divisions of the Bentley Affair have persisted over time and in new media.

CLEARING THE TEXT

In the 1960s, Fredson Bowers shepherded a discipline-wide effort to critically establish the texts of the English and American canons through the copy-text method of W. W. Greg.[18] For Bowers, an editor's task was to derive an eclectic text manifesting an author's "final intentions" to a greater extent than any authorial edition or manuscript.[19] The Modern Language Association (MLA), and more specifically the MLA's Center for the Editions of American Authors (CEAA), formally embraced Bowers's vision in its *Statement of Editorial Principles* (1967). Between 1966 and 1975, the Center allocated more than $6 million in funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and other sources to support editors preparing critical editions conforming to the guidelines defined by Bowers.[20] Oddly enough, the first challenge to this policy came from outside the academy. In a two-part *New York Review of Books* article, Edmund Wilson accused the MLA of suppressing his plan to publish the American classics in compact, inexpensive editions.[21] Wilson, drawing support from a like-minded Lewis

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[18] In Greg's approach, an editor selects a copy-text from among the manuscripts and early editions of a literary work to serve as his authority for the accidentals and then uses his own judgment or theory to resolve any differences in the substantive readings offered by these materials. See Greg, "The Rationale of Copy-Text," 26.

[19] Fredson Bowers, "Some Principles for Scholarly Editions of Nineteenth-Century American Authors," *Studies in Bibliography* 17 (1964): 226–227. Because any printed form of the work, even those published during the author's lifetime, would necessarily exhibit the corruptions and interventions of editors, compositors, and other publishing agents, Bowers recommended that editors select an author's manuscript, whenever possible, as their copy-text.

[20] Tom Davis, "The CEAA and Modern Textual Editing," *Library*, Fifth Series, 32 (1977): 61.

[21] *The New York Review of Books*, September 26 and October 10, 1968. A revised version of this article was published as Wilson, "The Fruits of the MLA," in *The Devils and Canon Barham: Ten Essays on Poets, Novelists and Monsters* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1973), 154-202.

Mumford article,[22] contended that the CEAA editions were ungainly volumes full of arcane textual notes, a waste of public funds and scholarly labor. Wilson's article was ill-tempered, and some CEAA-sponsored editors responded in-kind.

This controversy bears remarkable similarities to the Bentley affair, though two centuries removed and an ocean apart. In both cases, professional writers rose up against the editorial procedures of the academic elite, whom they regarded as cloistered and pedantic. They gained popular support by appealing to the common suspicion that university dons were appropriating or withholding national treasures. Wilson wanted to make literary texts in the public domain accessible to the public.[23] He was not opposed to editing per se—he had been an editor himself—but rather the time-consuming and expensive process of assembling and publishing a critical apparatus,[24] which was required for any edition to pass inspection by a CEAA examiner and receive a seal reading "An Approved Text."[25] As if this process did not create enough of a delay, the publisher (often a university press) of a CEAA edition was permitted to wait two years before leasing the text to commercial publishers for reprinting in practical editions.[26]

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[22] "Emerson Behind Barbed Wire," *The New York Review of Books*, January 18, 1967, 3-5.

[23] His vision was realized posthumously by the non-profit Library of America (LOA), which has published over 150 volumes since 1982.

[24] For Bowers, this entailed (at minimum) a list of emendations to the copy-text, a record of line-end hyphenation in the copy-text document, and a historical collation of the substantive variants in other authoritative documents. See "Some Principles for Scholarly Editions," 223–228.

[25] CEAA, *Statement of Editorial Principles* (New York: Modern Languages Association, 1967), 11. The seal was also available to editions that did not receive public funds through the CEAA.

[26] Ibid., 14.

The American disputants agreed on at least one point: the text should not be sprinkled with diacritical symbols or numerical markers.[27] In many scholarly editions, numerical markers function as keys to textual, philological, and/or historical notes, which are printed at the foot of each page. Bowers preferred to eschew markers and relegate "all but the most immediately pertinent of the apparatus to appendices in the rear."[28] In his *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker* (1953-61), for example, he uses footnotes only for substantive emendations to his copy-text. The CEAA went one step further, asking editors and publishers to place all of their notes after the last page of their texts. G. Thomas Tanselle, who anointed himself as the leading (if unofficial) spokesperson for Bowers and the CEAA during the 1970s, argues that this clear-text approach emphasizes "the primacy of the text," offers no distractions to the reader, and is easier to reprint.[29]

Tanselle's insistence on "the primacy of the text" strikes some editors as arrogance of a distinctly American flavor. Peter Shillingsburg observes that "English scholarly editions have tended to use notes at the foot of the text page, indicating, tacitly, a greater modesty about the 'established' text and drawing attention more forcibly to at least some of the alternative forms of the text."[30] For Shillingsburg, the clear-text edition represents a text as *the work itself* rather than one version among many. D. C. Greetham argues that this interface design reflects the influence of the New Criticism on editorial

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[27] Wilson, "Fruits of the MLA," 160.

[28] "Old-Spelling Editions of Dramatic Texts," in *Studies in Honor of T. W. Baldwin*, ed. D. C. Allen (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1958), 14.

[29] "Some Principles for Editorial Apparatus," *Studies in Bibliography* 25 (1972): 47.

[30] "An Inquiry into the Social Status of Texts and Modes of Textual Criticism," *Studies in Bibliography* 42 (1989): 55–78.

procedure. Given "a cultural context that favored close reading of a fixed, definitive text," he reasons, it is not surprising that the literary work came to resemble a "well wrought urn" on the printed page, even when this appearance belies a state of irresolvable textual uncertainty.[31] In Greetham's view, Tanselle's clear-text ideal evinces his "platonic nostalgia."[32] If an editor desires, as Bowers put it, "to strip the veil of print from the text,"[33] dropping this veil at the foot of the exposed text seems irreverent.

In focusing on the rhetorical impact of footnotes versus endnotes, Shillingsburg and Greetham fail to acknowledge that the CEEA's primary motive for the clear-text format was to encourage dissemination of the text sans apparatus. To this end, the CEAA chose to have its seal (reprinted with the text) read "An Approved Text" rather than "An Approved Edition" and decided not to require the publisher to lease the apparatus. Although this policy granted the publisher a monopoly on the apparatus, the CEAA may not have anticipated much demand for a critical edition after its text had been reprinted in a practical edition. The Center seems to have assumed that, for most readers, a critical apparatus amounts to a textual dustbin. Furthermore, it expected editors of classroom editions to supply their own explanatory notes. Even in this case, Tanselle prefers endnotes: "It is perhaps true that more students will read them as footnotes, but the price paid for this attention is a high one: not simply the distraction from the text (which is after all more important for the students to read), but the cumulative psychological effect

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[31] Greetham, *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994), 341-42.

[32] *Theories of the Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 39.

[33] *On Editing Shakespeare* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966), 87.

of always (or nearly always) encountering classic works encased in an obtrusive editorial framework which sets them apart from other books read outside of class."[34]

Tanselle recognizes that many scholars and teachers object to clear-text editions because they force readers to flip back and forth from the text to the endnotes. While acknowledging that the text page cannot simultaneously accommodate immersive and analytical reading experiences, he urges editors to privilege the former. But the decision to facilitate one mode of reading over the other will not always settle the matter of the arrangement of the apparatus. If explanatory notes are necessary for comprehension, their absence from the text page may present a greater obstacle to immersion than their presence. And footnotes may hamper an analytical reading if they limit the space allotted for commentary or require the editor to use a cryptic shorthand.

Tanselle's concern that footnotes visually differentiate "classic works" from "other books," meanwhile, shifts the debate from the practical to the theoretical arena. For many editors, the fundamental purpose of the apparatus is to assert this very distinction, alerting readers to the history of transmission and commentary surrounding canonical texts. Some editors also take issue with Tanselle's assumption that "the kind of apparatus presented is an indication less of the nature of the text than of the type of audience for which the edition is intended."[35] Shillingsburg, for example, argues that editors of classroom editions have a responsibility to convey the textual complexity of a

[34] Tanselle, "Some Principles for Editorial Apparatus," 48n.

[35] Ibid., 42.

work to students.[36] An apparatus consisting solely of explanatory notes encourages readers to think of the text and the work as identical, a static object to be interpreted.

While this sense of textual stability is, in most cases, a misimpression, it is a misimpression that Tanselle and Bowers saw fit to foster in the vast majority of readers. According to literary historians, the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle approach was motivated by dissatisfaction with the actual products of the commercial printing press, which are shaped by many hands and therefore fail to represent the literary work of art as an object analogous to those in the fine arts. In his *Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, Jerome McGann accuses Bowers of falling prey to "a Romantic conception of literary production" that emphasizes "the autonomy of the isolated author."[37] The ideology of final intentions, McGann argues, obscures the fact that critical editions, like practical editions, are "produced under the pressure of contemporary demands."[38] But perhaps Bowers devised his intentionalist doctrine, in the first place, to serve a practical end: "literary critics, historians, general scholars, students of all kinds—these need as authoritative a reconstruction of a full text as the documents allow, not editions of the separate documents."[39] Although Bowers recognized that variants between documents might reflect changing authorial intentions, he was convinced that literate society desires a *textus receptus* for each work, not a text variorum. He hoped that a critical text

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[36] Shillingsburg, "Practical Editions of Literary Texts," *Variants* 4 (2005-2006): 29-55.

[37] *Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1983; repr., Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 8.

[38] Ibid., 100.

[39] "Remarks on Eclectic Texts," *Essays in Bibliography, Text, and Editing* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975), 528.

claiming to capture the author's *final* intentions, together with a critical apparatus recording all variants and emendations, would both chronicle and terminate the processes of literary production and transmission that had resulted in so much indeterminacy and corruption. It is possible, therefore, that McGann has confused the means and ends of the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle regime, which was ultimately invested in producing definitive editions, not realizing authorial intentions.

Although McGann's *Critique* exposes the notion of textual definitiveness as a fiction, particularly for works that survive in multiple competing witnesses, the question of whether it is a necessary fiction remains. Bowers embraced the commonsensical notion that literary critics, in order to engage in conversation with each other, require a shared object of study. Only textual critics, he reasoned, need concern themselves with variants. McGann, on the other hand, insists that textual and literary criticism should not be conceived as separate domains but rather as two phases of any critical operation in the discipline. Textual criticism, he argues, is "incumbent upon anyone who works with and teaches literary products."[40] Although textual criticism, traditionally defined, is primarily concerned with preparing editions, McGann expands the term to include "materialist hermeneutics," or interpretive studies of particular versions of a work. Reflecting the interventions of materialists like McGann and D. F. Mckenzie, literary scholars now tend to bundle the distinct practices of traditional textual criticism, materialist hermeneutics, and analytic and descriptive bibliography under the term *textual studies*.

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[40] "The Monks and the Giants: Textual and Bibliographical Studies and the Interpretation of Literary Works," in *Textual Criticism and Literary Interpretation*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 186.

THE VERSIONING PROBLEM

In 1989, McGann and Mckenzie presented papers at a conference on New Directions in Textual Studies at the University of Texas.[41] According to W. Speed Hill, this conference marks the point at which "versioning" replaced editing as the dominant paradigm in Anglo-American editorial theory.[42] Textual studies has remained a subdiscipline of literary studies, however, partly because material resources are not sufficient for large numbers of scholars to study multiple versions of works, even those for which critical editions are available. Theoretically, a critical apparatus offering a full historical collation allows the reader to reconstruct, from the critical text, the texts of all collated documents. But many editors do not record minor variants and, in any event, few textual critics consider the historical collation to be a self-sufficient instrument for studying versions. For Bowers, a list of variant readings merely "insures that all cards are on the table."[43] David Scott Kastan, meanwhile, finds collation notes "usually unintelligible."[44] At best, a critical apparatus can offer little more than a starting point because it represents each version as a verbal sequence, not as a physical book or manuscript. This emphasis on "linguistic codes," McGann argues, leads scholars to undervalue the extent to which "bibliographic codes" such as ink, typeface, and paper

[41] The proceedings have been published as *New Directions in Textual Studies*, ed. Dave Oliphant and Robin Bradford (Austin, TX: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, 1990).

[42] "From 'an Age of Editing' to a 'Paradigm Shift': An Editorial Retrospect," TEXT 16 (2006): 39.

[43] Bowers, "Some Principles for Scholarly Editions," 228.

[44] *Shakespeare and the Book* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 124.

contribute to a text's meaning.[45] Although facsimile editions can simulate some of these features, economic and spatial factors limit their ability to represent multiple versions.

In the late 1980s, McGann looked to the synoptic edition, most famously exemplified by Hans Walter Gabler's edition of *Ulysses* (1984),[46] as a potential solution to the versioning problem. Gabler's parallel-text format offers a critical reading text on the rectos and on the versos a "continuous manuscript text" which synopsizes Joyce's manuscripts through an "integral apparatus" of diacritical symbols. The edition is *genetic* in orientation, tracking the author's development of his work into its first published form. McGann speculated that it might be possible to produce "a continuous production text" that would indicate, not reproduce, the linguistic and bibliographical codes of all editions of a work fashioned during the author's lifetime.[47] Such an edition would be *social* in orientation, drawing attention to the collaborative nature of literary production. McGann did not embark on this project, however, possibly because scholars found the integral apparatus little more usable than the critical apparatus. When McKenzie died in 1999 before completing his edition of *The Works of William Congreve*,[48] some observers assumed that the effort to devise a workable model for a "social-text" edition had stalled.

McGann, however, had merely abandoned the quest for a *print-based* model. In 2000, he announced the completion of the first installment of *The Complete Writings and*

[45] McGann, *The Textual Condition*, 13.

[46] Gabler, ed., *Ulysses: A Critical and Synoptic Edition* (New York: Garland, 1984).

[47] *The Textual Condition*, 30. McGann does not fully explain why he deems the author's death to be the cut-off point.

[48] This three-volume edition, which McKenzie labored on for 20 years, will finally be published in 2008 by Oxford University Press.

Pictures of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a hypermedia archive project he is supervising under the auspices of the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH) at the University of Virginia.[49] The finished archive, McGann predicted, will combine "a critical edition of Rossetti's textual works with a complete collection of facsimile editions of those works and a complete set of illustrated catalogues of all his pictorial works, including the reproduction of those works."[50] Yet the archive, now in the last of four projected installments, provides no emended or eclectic texts, only a critical apparatus, transcripts, and facsimiles. It seems, therefore, that McGann is seeking to undermine the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle regime on two fronts: by reproducing documents rather than synthesizing them, and by redefining critical editing. McGann claims that the *Rossetti Archive* is critically edited because "critical, which is to say computational attention was kept simultaneously on the physical features and conditions of actual objects (specific documents and pictorial works) as well as on their formal and conceptual characteristics (genre, metrics, iconography)."[51] Here McGann slips in the adjective "computational" as if it were synonymous with "critical," implying that editing and encoding a text are similar and even substitutable procedures. In the final section of this chapter, I will interrogate this notion of computational editing.

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[49] For information on IATH, see http://www.iath.virginia.edu/. For *The Complete Writings and Pictures of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, see http://www.rossettiarchive.org. Henceforth, I will refer to this work as the *Rossetti Archive*, as it is commonly known.

[50] *Radiant Textuality: Literature after the World Wide Web* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 158.

[51] "From Text to Work: Digital Tools and the Emergence of the Social Text," *Text* 16 (2006): 58-59.

A NEW ORDER

McGann's analogy is more boldly asserted in the title and packaging of *Electronic Textual Editing* (2006), a collection of essays recently published by the MLA. The front matter includes the "Guidelines for Editors of Scholarly Editions," maintained by the MLA's Committee on Scholarly Editions (CSE), and inside the back cover is a CD-ROM containing the *Guidelines for Electronic Encoding and Interchange*, published by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) Consortium.[52] The former set of guidelines are far more catholic in regard to authors, texts, and editorial approaches than those maintained by the CEAA, which the CSE replaced in 1976. The CSE does not discourage modernization, for example, nor does it require a particular type or layout of apparatus.[53] Similarly, the TEI guidelines are comprehensive and inclusive, reflecting the contributions of an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars. The 1,300-page manual specifies modular "tag sets" that, after some combination and modification, most editors will find suitable to their materials. The tags are written in standard generalized markup language (SGML) or extensible markup language (XML) and comprise a document grammar known as the TEI Document Type Definition (DTD) or schema.

The two sets of guidelines are referenced in the essays they frame, and even cross-pollinate each other. This should not surprise us, given that the authors and editors

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[52] Committee on Scholarly Editions, "Guidelines for Editors of Scholarly Editions," in *Electronic Textual Editing*, ed. Lou Barnard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, and John Unsworth (New York: MLA, 2006), 23-36, also available at http://www.mla.org/cse_guidelines. Text Encoding Initiative Consortium, *Guidelines for Electronic Encoding and Interchange*, ed. C. M. Sperberg-McQueen and Lou Burnard (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002), also available at http://www.tei-c.org/Guidelines/.

[53] Editors must justify any deviations from the traditional critical apparatus, however.

of the essays are involved in scholarly electronic projects. The CSE and TEI also share members and engage in dialogue. Thus we find that the five keywords identified by the CSE as criteria for a "reliable text" are also replete in the TEI guidelines: accuracy, adequacy, appropriateness, consistency and explicitness. But when we find acronyms such as DTD, XML and SGML appearing in the CSE guidelines, we sense that something is amiss. The problem is not that the CSE guidelines cover electronic as well as print editions—a linguistically identical text and apparatus can be presented in either medium—but that the incorporation of TEI guidelines raises the bar for electronic scholarly editions and limits their diversity. It is highly unlikely, in fact, that any electronic edition failing to conform to the TEI guidelines (at least in spirit) would pass the CSE review process and receive a seal reading "An Approved Edition."

In 2005, the *William Blake Archive*, another IATH project, became the first electronic edition approved by the CSE.[54] Though the *Blake Archive* employs its own DTDs for digitized primary materials, it uses TEI markup for "its bibliographies, collection lists, and Erdman's *Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, where description of the physical artifact is not the DTD's central purpose."[55] Encoders at IATH find TEI markup better suited for describing linguistic structures (such as a stanza) than bibliographical structures (such as a page), and especially ill equipped to describe

[54] See Morris Eaves, Robert N. Essick, and Joseph Viscomi, eds., *The William Blake Archive*, http://www.blakearchive.org/blake/main.html. Henceforth, I will refer to this work as the *Blake Archive*, as it is commonly known.

[55] Eaves, Essick, and Viscomi, eds., *Blake Archive*, "Technical Summary" http://www.blakearchive.org/blake/public/about/tech/index.html.

overlapping structures.[56] These limitations arise because valid SGML and XML documents rely on another document to supply instructions for displaying or printing content; consequently, standard DTDs lack the vocabulary to describe how content was conveyed by the original artifact. A substantial revision of the TEI guidelines is now underway that promises to address these issues.[57] And despite their differences, the institute and the consortium agree that digital humanities data should be hardware- and software-independent and "machine-readable."

Today, every new scholarly edition is prepared in electronic files that are machine-readable at least to some degree, for a computer must render them "human-readable" for print or online publication. In either case, the CSE recommends that editors encode the files in an open-source, non-proprietary format (e.g., XML rather than Microsoft Word) capable of returning sophisticated results to a scholar using a search engine. But only for electronic editions does their recommendation take on the force of a requirement. This double standard has also been embraced by the NEH, which warns applicants for scholarly edition grants that "online projects that include TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) conformant transcription and offer free access are encouraged and will be given preference over other online projects."[58] Since incorporating TEI markup does not obviate any of an editor's other responsibilities, preparers of an NEH-funded

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[56] See Daniel Pitti and John Unsworth, "After the Fall -- Structured Data at IATH" (paper, ALLC/ACH Conference, Debrecen, Hungary, July 6-10, 1998), http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/ach98.html.

[57] See Text Encoding Initiative, "TEI: P5 Guidelines," http://www.tei-c.org/Guidelines/P5/.

[58] National Endowment for the Humanities, "Scholarly Edition Grants," http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/editions.html.

electronic edition take on more work with less remuneration. The NEH and CSE guidelines, therefore, inadvertently provide a disincentive to electronic publication of scholarly editions. They also stifle innovation, for the time and expertise spent on text encoding might have been devoted to interface design and rich media integration. The TEI DTD itself forms a barrier to such innovation, as it is based on the thesis that *any* text consists of ordered hierarchies of content objects that are abstract enough to be delivered through existing and future interfaces.[59] In most cases, these interfaces will resemble those used for non-humanities data, since a standardized back-end (text encoding) lends itself to a standardized front-end (graphical representation). This practice of encoding and representing humanities artifacts as information objects—the TEI slogan is "Yesterday's Information Tomorrow"—flies in the face of many humanities scholars and teachers, who view works of art and culture as historically and materially situated, as unique combinations of form and content. From this point of view, digital humanists should seek to design interfaces that bespeak the unique qualities of these materials and accommodate the desiderata of scholars, teachers, and students.

Unfortunately, the technical best-practices section of the CSE guidelines offers little advice on interface design and fails to reference particular audiences and uses. Interface designers will also search in vain through the guidelines for a comprehensive

[59] Steven J. DeRose, David G. Durand, Elli Mylonas, and Allen Renear. "What is Text, Really?" *Journal of Computing in Higher Education* 1 (1990): 3-26. In a later publication, Renear observes that many in the text encoding community have abandoned this ontological thesis and instead argue that in order for a text to be searchable and interchangeable, it must be transformed into ordered hierarchies of content objects. See Allen H. Renear, "Out of Praxis: Three (Meta)Theories of Textuality," in *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*, ed. Kathryn Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 107-26.

definition of the term *scholarly edition*. This omission may not seem egregious in the case of print scholarly editions, for editors and vetters have numerous examples to consult. Yet this plentitude obscures the fact that no scholarly consensus exists, even on the meaning of the term *edition*. For bibliographers, an edition consists of all copies of a book wherein the text is printed from the same typesetting or an image of it. [60] A reprint or facsimile, therefore, is not an edition in its own right, but rather a reproduction of an earlier edition, even if it includes a fresh apparatus. Textual critics have not always maintained this distinction, however, and publishers use the term even more loosely. Thus Edward Vanhoutte concludes that "any kind of available text qualifies as an edition, and any kind of electronically available text qualifies as an electronic edition, just as any printed text can be called a paper or a print edition."[61]

But perhaps scholars should wait for publishers and general readers to adopt such reductive terminology before adopting it themselves. Though print culture has taken to calling all printed texts editions, at present digital culture only uses the term for proprietary electronic texts that simulate a print artifact at the two dimensional level of the page. Thus facsimiles of copyrighted books and magazines sold under the terms of Digital Rights Management for such programs as Adobe or Zinio Reader are referred to as digital editions, but Web pages that freely reproduce the linguistic content of materials

[60] See Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1995), 313-14. Gaskell's "classic manual of bibliography" was first published in 1972, and therefore does not address what constitutes an edition after the machine-press period. Nonetheless, it has yet to be superceded by a manual addressing the use of digital technology in print and online publishing.

[61] Edward Vanhoutte, "Prose Fiction and Modern Manuscripts: Limitations and Possibilities of Text Encoding for Electronic Editions," in *Electronic Textual Editing*, ed. Lou Barnard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, and John Unsworth (New York: MLA, 2006), 161.

in the public domain are called e-texts. Designers of Web sites containing multiple texts, meanwhile, tend to prefer spatial metaphors for their projects, such as library or archive. This nomenclature not only calls into question the CSE's decision to label the *Blake Archive* an edition, it poses a challenge to the theory that the dominant metaphor informing Web development is the book. Theodor H. Nelson, who coined the term hypertext, ultimately proposed a "universal electronic publishing system and archive," not a digital book per se.[62] Similarly, IATH developers view themselves as constructing virtual archives of material artifacts, not electronic scholarly editions.

This distinction may seem tenuous, for editions and archives are both collections of materials. The privileging of the archive metaphor, however, has a profound impact on digital resource development for students and scholars. McGann argues that students and scholars face two fundamental problems when attempting to use books to study books.[63] First, at the level of the scholarly edition, in many cases a single codex cannot feasibly bind together copies of all significant versions of a work. Second, at the level of the library or archive, organizational metadata are not integrated with the materials they reference. In some cases, a physical archive can overcome the first problem by collecting all of the relevant books and manuscripts, but it cannot overcome the second. Nor can it make the artifacts themselves available to remote scholars—only their metadata. A digital archive, on the other hand, cannot reproduce every bibliographical feature of these

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[62] See chapter two of Theodor H. Nelson, *Literary Machines* (Sausalito, CA: Mindful Press, 1981), repr. in *New Media Reader*, ed. Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 443-461.

[63] "The Rationale of Hypertext," 11-32.

artifacts, but it can make its entire database publicly available over the Internet. Digital archivists, therefore, are not directly concerned with using new media to improve scholarly editions, but rather with addressing the limitations of physical archives.

Unlike most library and museum Web sites, the IATH archives offer collections that are not physically housed at any one location. John Unsworth, a former director of IATH, classifies these sites as "thematic research collections," which Carole L. Palmer describes as "digital aggregations of primary sources and related materials that support research on a theme."[64] Given this *raison d'etre*, one would expect to find that thematic research collections do not suffer the scholarly edition's identity crisis as a site for both reading and reference. Yet McGann insists that the *Rossetti Archive* "remains a study environment embedded in a reading environment."[65] This description seems to invert if not misrepresent the site's architecture, since the user of the archive must wade through indexical and critical layers before arriving at a primary text. Once there, the user encounters a series of one-page transcripts, facsimile thumbnails, and iconic links to the apparatus (Figure 22). If the interface of this "reading environment" seems designed to prevent immersion, it nonetheless remains consistent with McGann's breakdown of reading into linear, spatial, and radial operations. The first two operations decipher linguistic and bibliographic codes, respectively, while the third radiates out from the text

[64] Unsworth, "Thematic Research Collections" (paper, MLA Annual Convention, Washington DC, December 27-30, 2000), http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/MLA.00/. Palmer, "Thematic Research Collections," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 348. For a list of such projects at IATH, see http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/IathProjects/projects/homepage.

[65] *Radiant Textuality*, 58.

to the apparatus and other sources.[66] Radial reading is the most important form of reading, McGann argues, because linear and spatial reading "remain closely tied to the illusion of textual immediacy," a sense that the text at hand is not only identical with the work but independent of other texts.[67]

McGann's advocacy of radial reading predates its apotheosis in the Web and appears to be based instead on the poststructuralist concept of intertextuality, which Michel Foucault defines as an aspect of a book's nature obscured by its physical form:

> The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of reference to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network … the book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands; and it cannot remain within the little parallelepiped that contains it: its unity is variable and relative. As soon as one questions that unity, it loses its self-evidence; it indicates itself, constructs itself, only on the basis of a complex field of discourse.[68]

In *Hypertext 2.0*, George P. Landow responds that, unlike the book, hypertext "creates an almost embarrassingly literal embodiment" of de-centered textuality, making the insights

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[66] McGann, *The Textual Condition*, 113, 120. Elsewhere, McGann correlates his triad of linear, spatial, and radial kinds of reading with Shillingsburg's triad of text, document, and work, respectively. See "Theory of Texts," 20-21.

[67] *The Textual Condition*, 122.

[68] *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), 23.

of theorists like Foucault apparent to all.[69] Whereas a standard print or electronic scholarly edition employs a literary text "as an unbroken axis off which to hang annotation and commentary," Landow speculates that a fully hypertextual presentation would break the text up into significant units or *lexia* (after Barthes) and link them to each other as well as to relevant lexia in the network.[70] Such an arrangement, Landow argues, would not only blur the boundaries between reader and writer—as in a creative hypertext fiction like Michael Joyce's *Afternoon* (1986)—but between text and apparatus.

Editors tend to view Landow's rationale for hypertext, unlike McGann's, as ideological rather than practical. Consequently, digital humanists have sought to archive literary texts in documentary form, not to emancipate them from the book. But since these archives are not only "collections of digital primary resources," but are themselves "second generation digital resources,"[71] they face their own unique identity crisis—are they primarily a genre of scholarly production, analogous to a critical or documentary edition, or a means of it? Kastan argues that the Shakespeare Electronic Archive at MIT is "not an edition":

> it is not designed to be read. It is an archive, and like any archive yields its treasures only to diligent and capable researchers. An edition, however, is designed to present not the archive but the results of one's investigations there. If such results can be no more authoritative than the completeness of the archive and

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[69] *Hypertext 2.0* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 32.

[70] Ibid., 49.

[71] Unsworth, "Thematic Research Collections," http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/MLA.00/MLA-00-0.html.

> the competence of the investigator permit, they can, within those limits, present a text that can confidently and conveniently be read.[72]

Kastan's somewhat polemical definitions translate well to the technical arena. Electronic archives and editions are both databases, but if an electronic edition is to remain analogous to its print counterpart, it should present a subset of the archive's data, the sorted results of a query. This distinction poses a challenge to McGann and the CSE, for it requires a scholarly edition's text—not merely its apparatus—to reflect an editor's filtering of the archive on behalf of readers.

While the CSE might respond that Kastan's criteria are codex-based, they are in fact human-based and apply equally to the computer. The computer has changed how and what we read, but it has not yet changed our information-processing capacity. Kastan takes human factors into account when he maintains that an editor should "present a text that can confidently and conveniently be read." The CSE guidelines, meanwhile, only state that "the scholarly edition's basic task it to present a reliable text"; they do not mention convenience or readability. Of course, some of the finest scholarly editions in print are hardly convenient to read. Yet the volumes reflect human choices and compromises that are relatively final, barring yet another new edition. The electronic medium, on the other hand, offers editors the opportunity to rethink decisions and remedy mistakes. The CSE review process seems especially outdated, therefore, when it stipulates that "editions should be submitted for review before publication, no later than in the proof stage, so that any changes recommended during the review can still be

[72] *Shakespeare and the Book*, 129.

made."[73] For some digital editions, like the *Canterbury Tales Project* CD-ROMS,[74] this protocol remains viable. But digital and physical archives tend to open their doors long before they complete their collections. The *Blake Archive*, for example, appeared online nine years before its approval by the CSE in 2005, and has acquired new material since. Similarly, editors of Web-based electronic editions should publish their texts as soon as they are reliable enough to serve the public. The main reason they fail to do so is the time required to achieve TEI conformance, the CSE's *imprimatur* of reliability in digital publishing. This process creates a shortage, not of literary texts as in the CEAA's era (the Web has fostered the opposite problem) but of electronic scholarly editions. While the computer has made it far easier to generate critical apparatuses— the real true guarantor of reliability—they have also made possible a new and largely human task.

Once an initial investment in encoding is made and a DTD adopted, the capaciousness of Web servers will always tempt editors to steer in the direction of an archive. But few editors can answer this siren call. Digital archives require yearly funding for hardware, software, rights, data entry, coding, site design, and maintenance. The *Rossetti Archive*, for example, lists IATH, NEH, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, IBM, the University of Virginia, the University of Michigan Press, the J. Paul Getty Trust, and almost 50 individuals as contributors.[75] The phrase "McGann's *Rossetti*

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[73] Committeee on Scholarly Editions, "CSE Review Process," Modern Language Association, http://www.mla.org/resources/documents/rep_scholarly/cse_review_process.

[74] Peter Robinson directs the Canterbury Tales Project, which has produced seven CD-ROM editions, each on a different tale or manuscript. See http://www.canterburytalesproject.org/.

[75] Mcgann, ed., *Rossetti Archive*, "Credits" http://www.rossettiarchive.org/about/credits.html.

Archive," therefore, is more of a stretch than "Gabler's *Ulysses*." This is no slight—digital archives are not scholarly productions to the same degree as print editions.[76] As Unsworth has suggested, library/museum professionals should consider developing such projects, employing professors as consultants.[77] As long as thematic research collections primarily emerge from the academy, few institutions will receive sufficient funds to produce literary collections, and single-author projects will center on canonical writers.

Seemingly oblivious to IATH's hegemony, McGann intimates that the *Rossetti Archive* provides a model for the social edition unrealizable in print: "a central purpose of *The Rossetti Archive* project was to prove the correctness of a social-text approach to editing—which is to say, to push traditional scholarly models of editing and textuality beyond the Masoretic wall of the linguistic object we call 'the text.' The proof of concept would be the making of the archive."[78] Note that McGann stresses the "correctness" rather than the feasibility of a social-text approach, which he defines as the study of bibliographical objects as social objects that are functions of particular makers, users, and purposes. But a social-text critic, above all others, should ask "correctness" for whom and for what? Even if, for sake of argument, digital archives became available for a wide range of authors, and all access and portability issues were resolved, they would not obviate critical editions until they fulfilled the same demand. The majority of

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[76] By a "scholarly production," I mean an artifact produced primarily through the labor of a scholar or scholars. McGann's role in the archive is more analogous to that of a principal investigator overseeing a scientific project conducted by a laboratory team.

[77] Unsworth, "Thematic Research Collections," http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~jmu2m/MLA.00/MLA-00-6.html.

[78] "From Text to Work," 58.

general readers, students, and even literary critics still want a linguistic object that is stable, convenient, and reliable.

This obstinacy troubles materialists like McGann as well as process-oriented scholars like Shillingsburg, who trumpet a technology-enabled "paradigm shift" in textual criticism toward an emphasis on the interpretive significance of documentary states. Shillingsburg argues that "the ignorance in literary studies" concerning the textual histories of works stems from a lack of rigor.[79] More likely, it is a pragmatic response to information overload. When users search for "The Blessed Damozel" in the *Rossetti Archive*, for example, they can examine 105 images and texts. Understanding the social processes that resulted in this bewildering array of objects would leave little time for other endeavors. If, on the other hand, a critic were to accept the text from an edited collection like W. M. Rossetti's *The Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti* (1911) as "the work" (heaven forbid), the time saved could be used to read the works that inspired Rosetti's poem, Dante's *Vita Nuova* and Poe's "The Raven," or in developing a critical methodology outside the domain of textual studies. The all-consuming nature of textual criticism is demonstrated by the fact that textual critics delve into matters of, for example, feminist or postcolonial theory about as frequently as feminists and postcolonialists discuss variants. Yet because texts are the *sine qua non* of literary studies, McGann insists that textual criticism is "a method that students of literature must and should use when they examine, interpret, and reproduce the works we inherit from the past."[80]

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[79] Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google*, 189-199.

[80] McGann, "The Monks and the Giants," 187.

If so, they will need better tools. Although the *Rossetti Archive* has accumulated digital surrogates of Rossetti's entire corpus, it underperforms older instruments when it comes to facilitating comparative analysis of a set of these objects. Hardware limitations are partly to blame—a computer monitor cannot simulate the optical effect of a Hinman collator, which allows scholars to superimpose one state of an edition over another. The archive's main problem, however, is the neglect of page-level interface design—users cannot view more than one image or textual witness at a time (as in a parallel text edition). Perhaps most regrettably, when studying Rossetti's famous "double works" users cannot juxtapose a poem and a painting without opening and positioning two windows. The archive's lack of coordination is especially surprising given that the *Blake Archive* allows users to compare different copies of a work in one window. At a recent symposium,[81] however, Matthew Kirschenbaum, the *Blake Archive*'s technical editor, informed me that it occurred to him to add this feature only after he discovered that another Web site had implemented it using materials from the *Blake Archive*.

The shadow site discovered by Kirschenbaum embodies the disconnect between editors, developers, and users of digital archives. According to Kirschenbaum, developers tend to think of an archive's interface as already supplied, in large part, by the user's browser, desktop, and operating system.[82] This inclination draws support from the archive metaphor itself. Visitors to physical archives, after all, consider themselves lucky

[81] "Digital Textual Studies: Past, Present and Future" (symposium, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, October 19-21, 2006).

[82] "'So the Colors Cover the Wires': Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 524-25.

to find a reading room with an open table on which to spread out and compare, however awkwardly, their materials. Editors, meanwhile, are still adjusting to the decoupling of database and interface design in new media, a separation that does not exist in print media. McGann and his group at the IATH now regret their "failure to consider interface in a serious way….when we worked out the archive's original design, we deliberately chose to focus on the logical structure and to set aside any thought about the Interface for delivering the archive to its users. We made this decision in order to avoid committing ourselves to a delivery mechanism."[83] Accordingly, the site's design editor, Bethany Nowviskie, predicts that the interface will "always have something of a tacked-on quality."[84] Such an outcome, Kirschenbaum argues, is consistent with the standard workflow of digital humanities projects: "Too often put together as the final phase of a project under a tight deadline and an even tighter budget, the interface becomes the first and in most respects the exclusive experience of the project for its end users."[85] Future editors and directors should consider making interface design a preliminary stage in the process of constructing archives.

In some cases, ideological divisions within the field of textual studies may stymie the adoption of a more user-centered approach. In 2000, Peter Robinson argued that a critical edition should form the core of an archive of versions, serving as a guide to

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[83] McGann, *Radiant Textuality*, 141.

[84] "Interfacing the Rossetti Hypermedia Archive" (paper, annual conference of the Humanities and Technology Association, Charlottesville, VA, September 19-21, 2001), http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~bpn2f/1866/dgrinterface.html.

[85] Kirschenbaum, "Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability," 525.

variation.[86] The Digital Humanities community failed to embrace this model, however, fearing that users would privilege the "fabricated" text over the "authentic" versions. Their archives, it seems, only have room for critical apparatuses. And given their predilection for documentary editing, digital humanists have yet to implement proposals for database-driven critical editions. Charles L. Ross, for example, envisions an edition that allows users to assemble their own critical texts by selecting variants from the critical apparatus.[87] Raymond G. Siemens reverses this interactivity, proposing "a dynamic edition" in which readers construct an apparatus conducive to their individual analysis of a text.[88] Such models figure the reader as editor and promise to breathe new life into the critical edition *qua* scholarly edition. In the next chapter, I will discuss a project that reinvents the critical edition *qua* classroom edition.

[86] "The One Text and the Many Texts." *Literary & Linguistic Computing* 15, no. 1 (2000): 5-14.

[87] "The Electronic Text and the Death of the Critical Edition," 225-232.

[88] Siemens, "Shakespearean Apparatus? Explicit Textual Structures and the Implicit Navigation of Accumulated Knowledge," *TEXT* 14 (2002): 209-240.

Chapter 4: Reinventing the Classroom Edition

In the Fall of 2004, Professor John Rumrich and I decided to reshuffle the priorities of the Digital Humanities by considering interface first and text encoding last. Our initial idea was to create a Milton archive with a more user-friendly interface than that of *Early English Books Online* (EEBO), the resource on which most Miltonists now rely. EEBO has several drawbacks. First, the images on EEBO tend to be less legible than either print or electronic texts because they are derived from microfilm. Second, like most photographic facsimiles available online, they are not internally searchable and so sacrifice a key advantage of electronic over print texts. Third, not all scholars have access to EEBO, which is an expensive subscription service. Finally, when used as a reading and teaching environment, EEBO requires teachers and students to accustom themselves to the antiquated print conventions of a virtual Renaissance book while wrestling with a more or less unfamiliar and unwieldy electronic interface.[1] Only the bibliographically and technologically savvy can successfully negotiate this amalgam of archaic and new media forms. Many undergraduate students lack the former capacity, their professors the latter.

The matter of pedagogical utility and general accessibility was central to Professor Rumrich and I because at The University of Texas, as at most institutions, funding is more readily available for instructional technology projects than scholarly

[1] For an account of the strengths and weaknesses of EEBO as a scholarly environment, see Diana Kichuk, "Metamorphosis: Remediation in *Early English Books Online* (EEBO)," *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 22, no. 3 (September 2007): 291-303.

editions and archives. Given a recent surge of interest in teaching with digital facsimiles rather than edited texts, we imagined that a proposal for a student-oriented Milton archive would be well received. Recollections of our own experiences teaching Milton to undergraduates, however, suggested to us that they have more pressing needs. Many students struggle to achieve basic comprehension of Milton's poetry and prose—even when using a modernized edition—due to his complex and distinctive syntax. Furthermore, Milton's mythological, biblical, and classical sources are largely alien to them. Thomas H. Luxon has addressed the latter issue with a Web site titled *The John Milton Reading Room*:

> Since none of us has a virtual library in his or her head (as Milton did), reading Milton requires a library at one's elbow; teaching Milton requires a library in the classroom. I set about trying to make *The Milton Reading Room* into precisely such a tool. With hypertext links and the web, annotations need not be simply lists of things students haven't yet read or may never read; the link can take them to the texts cited, in a new window on their screen.[2]

Despite the similarity of the library and archive metaphors, the philosophy of Luxon's site is strikingly different than McGann's. The *Milton Reading Room* emphasizes the richness of the traditions that inform a work, not the complexity of its textual condition. In lieu of facsimiles and transcripts of every version, therefore, the site contains a single old-spelling text of each of Milton's poems and major prose works. Keywords and

[2] "Milton and the Web," in *Milton in Popular Culture*, ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers and Gregory M. Colon Semenza (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 231. See also Luxon, ed., *The John Milton Reading Room*, http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/.

phrases hyperlink to the annotations, wherein citations hyperlink not only to other texts in the site, but also to materials outside the site. Students may find themselves opening windows to classical works of art and literature at the *Perseus Library* and various museum websites, as well as to reference works such as the *OED*, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and the *MLA Bibliography*. This radial reading experience figures the Web as a place of openness and information sharing, an illusion that is shattered when visiting the site off-campus—many of the resources to which the site links require a subscription. The *Rossetti Archive*, on the other hand, responds to the proprietary side of the Web by amassing materials onsite. Even digital archives that focus on contextual resources rather than authorial works, such as the *Decameron Web*, do not rely on external sites to supply them. This centralization affords uniform access and navigation, but it also functions to keep visitors within a specific domain.

The ascendancy of McGann's model over Luxon's is consistent with the evolution of the Web. Ironically, the archival impulse that inspired the Internet, a network capable of ending the duplication of knowledge, has spawned more or less redundant Web sites that do not connect to each other. A precedent for this phenomenon exists, of course, in print cultural production. Yet whereas new print editions of a work often supply a shortage of older editions of that work, scarcity need not be a factor online. In the case of a work of art, for example, one high quality facsimile at one URL would be sufficient to provide global access. Redundancy, therefore, results from two factors: the technical ease of copying and publishing digital materials and the desire to surround them with apparatuses suitable for specific audiences. These factors would pose no problem if

they simply meant that the same facsimile would appear in multiple Web sites, because the sites offering the finest apparatuses and interface designs would ultimately rise to the top of search engines. What prevents this healthy process from taking place is the fact that libraries and museums rarely allow free republication of their digital resources, even with attribution. If duplication is permitted at all, fees must be paid and the physical artifact must often be re-digitized (and possibly damaged). This continues to be the case despite a recent court decision finding that reproductions lacking creativity have the same copyright status as the originals.[3] Facsimiles of public domain materials, therefore, are also in the public domain. To their credit, editors of Thematic Research Collections tend to permit free republication of their facsimiles and images (with some terms and conditions), but the expense of acquiring them from physical archives limits the number of such collections to the extent that even a giant like Milton lacks one. Thus digital culture reproduces material culture, not only its artifacts but also its antiquated notions of property rights. The first process has been a boon to scholars and students, the second an unnecessary constraint to the dissemination and adaptation of our cultural heritage.

Financial and logistical barriers, therefore, discouraged us from adopting either the library or archive model. And pedagogically speaking, we felt that neither model facilitates basic reading comprehension. Luxon's radial approach tends to multiply windows and distract students from their struggle to make sense of Milton's paragraph-

[3] *Bridgeman Art Library, Ltd. v. Corel Corp.*, 25 F. Supp. 2d 421 (S.D.N.Y. 1998); *on reconsideration*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 191 (S.D.N.Y. 1999). Judge Lewis A. Kaplan ruled that the plaintiff "has labored to create 'slavish copies' of public domain works of art. While it may be assumed that this required both skill and effort, there was no spark of originality -- indeed, the point of the exercise was to reproduce the underlying works with absolute fidelity. Copyright is not available in these circumstances."

long sentences, which reflect the grammars of Greek and Latin as well as the conventions of classical public oratory. To connect the subjects and predicates of such sentences, students must read with constant vigilance. Only after they have grasped the surface meaning will they have leisure to explore the intertextual connections underscored by Luxon. The *Milton Reading Room*, however, is ill equipped to support linear reading. Although users have the option of closing the frame containing the notes, they cannot make the hyperlinks in the text disappear (Figure 15). These purple lemma are arguably more obtrusive than the numerical makers in many print editions. And even if the site were to provide the option of a clear text, the absence of distinct pages and other bibliographic codes will indispose many readers. By representing the linguistic content of each book or pamphlet as a continuous column of text, the *Milton Reading Room* sacrifices a spatial connection not only to the original artifacts but also to the codex format itself. McGann's archive takes this distortion to a further extreme, loading each volume of Rossetti's poems into a single window through which readers must endlessly scroll. Either deliberately or unreflectively, Luxon and McGann have adopted the standard windows-based interface design of non-literary Web sites.

The question that concerned us was whether this interface design, when paired with literary works first published in a codex format, calls attention to itself and thereby hinders immersion. Until quite recently, the codex format was practically invisible to readers of books and magazines, having been naturalized over the course of two millenia.[4] In the 1990s, the unfamiliar reading environment of the Web rendered the

[4] For a brief history of the codex, see Greetham, *Textual Scholarship*, 58-60.

codex format visible once again. Early adopters claimed that, in contrast to print text, hypertext fosters a nonsequential mode of reading and writing.[5] Although this thesis has proved difficult to verify empirically, a 1997 study by John Morkes and Jakob Nielsen found that 79% of users scan rather than read Web pages.[6] If readers are significantly less likely to scan codex pages, as Morkes and Nielson all too readily assume, the phenomenon may result from differences in physical media rather than document format. Experiments conducted between 1981 and 2001 suggest that reading is 20 to 30 percent slower on screens than on paper.[7] Most experts predict, however, that this performance deficit will evaporate as monitor resolution and image quality improves.[8] Nonetheless, Nielsen argues that scanning will continue to prevail over reading because it is an adaptive response to the information overload and interactivity of the Web.[9]

Nielsen neglects to consider the possibility that his own Web design principles, which have been widely adopted, promote scanning as much as they respond to it. Many of his guidelines derive from textbooks on newspaper journalism, where students are

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[5] See, for example, Jakob Nielsen, *Hypertext and Hypermedia* (Boston: Academic Press, 1990), 1. While Nielsen (and particularly Landow) grossly overstate the linear/non-linear binary, most of their rebutters understate it. See, for example, Luxon, "Milton and the Web," 225-30.

[6] "Concise, Scannable, and Objective: How to Write for the Web," Useit.com, http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/writing.html.

[7] For an overview of this research, see Andrew Dillon, *Designing Usable Electronic Text*, 2nd Edition (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2004), 39-47.

[8] See, for example, Andrew Dillon, Lisa Kleinman, Gil Ok Choi, and Randolph Bias, "Visual Search and Reading Tasks Using ClearType and Regular Displays: Two Experiments" (paper, ACM and SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems, Montréal, Québec, Canada, April 22-27, 2006), http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~ct/chi_p618.pdf.

[9] Jakob Nielsen, *Designing Web Usability* (Indianapolis: New Riders, 2000), 104-110.

taught to write in an "inverted pyramid" style and place lead headlines "above the fold" so that readers can quickly scan the contents.[10] Like most newspaper editors, Nielsen believes that content should be "chunked" so that only readers who are deeply interested in a particular subject are forced to scroll through long columns of text. Nielsen's analogy between Web sites and newspapers holds up well because both tend to organize information in sections and exhibit a broadsheet layout. While the reason that most newspapers are printed as broadsheets remains something of a mystery,[11] time has not yet obscured the genesis of Web pages that are several times longer than they are wide. In the late 80s and early 90s, when the Internet was being developed, computer monitors were smaller and squarer than they are today, with screens roughly equivalent in size to an 8.5 x 11" sheet of paper. In most cases, text would wrap downward when it reached the right side of the display, so electronic "pages" came to be understood as vertical "screenfulls" of text. The paper feeding mechanisms of typewriters and printers also encouraged this view.

Over the last ten years, display width and resolution have nearly doubled. A fifteen-inch screen can now accommodate two pages of a standard hardcover book at actual size. The pros and cons of making web pages resemble an open book are seldom discussed, however, because one crucial aspect of the codex format has remained

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[10] Ibid., 112-122.

[11] See Kevin G. Barnhurst, *Seeing the Newspaper* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). Barnhurst finds that when the British government began taxing paper by the page in 1712, some octavo newspapers became quartos. Although this tax was discontinued in 1855, it was not until the competition of cable TV and the Web that serious newspapers begun to adopt the less expensive and more compact tabloid format previously reserved for yellow journalism.

invisible—the facing page. Except in the case of two-page spreads,[12] readers have trained themselves not to see the facing page.[13] Unfortunately, most histories of reading and the book evidence rather than chronicle this adaptive tunnel vision, overlooking the appearance and increasing disappearance of the facing page. Roger Chartier and David Scott Kastan, for example, characterize the transition "from codex to computer" as a tale of two storage and presentation media, of page versus screen.[14] Peter Stoicheff and Andrew Taylor argue that digital and material texts share "the page" in common, even if the former is dynamic and ephemeral and the latter static and enduring.[15] W. Speed Hill astutely observes that the computer screen "reiterates many of the liabilities of the scroll," such as difficulty of citation, but mistakenly assumes that scrolling is an inevitable quality of electronic texts rather than a particular design philosophy.[16] Web designers are aware, of course, that some users prefer to page rather than scroll through long articles. But they understand "paging" as replacing one column of text with another.[17]

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[12] While Web designers sometimes emulate a two-page spread, they do so without the "gutter"; i.e., the line running down the middle where the pages come together.

[13] Readers of small-format paperbacks, of course, often fold back the facing page. This technique probably reflects the reader's desire to hold the book more comfortably with one hand rather than to remove the facing page from the visual field.

[14] *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995); *Shakespeare and the Book*, 111-136.

[15] *The Future of the Page* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 3-26.

[16] W. Speed Hill, "From 'an Age of Editing' to a 'Paradigm Shift.'" 39.

[17] For an overview of studies on paging and scrolling, see Dillon, *Designing Usable Electronic Text*, 54. I am aware of no empirical research comparing the readability of facing page and single page designs, but see J. Ryan Baker, "Is Multiple-Column Online Text Better? It Depends!" *Usability News* 7, no.1, 2005, http://psychology.wichita.edu/surl/usabilitynews/72/columns.asp.

Professor Rumrich and I speculated that for a text intended to be read rather than scanned, a two-page interface design would offer three advantages over the one-column standard. First, it would conform to the widescreen aspect ratio of the new generation of displays and thereby reduce the frequency of scrolling and paging in the reading process.[18] Second, representing pages as rectos and versos would allow Web designers to maintain a higher degree of structural correspondence with the underlying print artifact. Even in the case of original content, we suspected that mimicking print conventions would improve comprehension in readers accustomed to encountering certain genres in codex form. Lastly, an interface resembling a book would appeal to bibliophiles disinclined to use electronic texts.

These "advantages," however, merely bring electronic and print texts into greater parity. With this realization, we decided to create a Web site that would resemble, not simulate, a print edition of *Paradise Lost*. The distinction between resembling and simulating was a crucial one for us, as we wanted to adhere to the logic and aesthetics of the book without reproducing its material constraints. These constraints have bedeviled editors of critical editions in their attempts to satisfy multiple audiences. When Gabler prepared his *Ulysses*, for example, he was not unaware of the controversy that had greeted early volumes of *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1960-1982). "Through a barbed wire entanglement of diacritical marks,"

[18] While text that flows across the entire browser window may appear to be the most efficient use of display real estate, studies show that reading comprehension decreases with line lengths greater than that of a modern printed book. Furthermore, readers are disinclined to scroll when line lengths are long. See M.C. Dyson and M. Haselgrove, "The Influence of Reading Speed and Line Length on the Effectiveness of Reading from a Screen," *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies* 54 (2001): 585-612.

Lewis Mumford had opined, "these 'journals' have now performed current American scholarship's ultimate homage to a writer of genius: they have made him unreadable."[19] Gabler's solution, as we have already seen, was a parallel-text interface offering readers a critical text with footnotes and scholars a synoptic text with integral apparatus. In the introduction to his *Poetical Works* of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (2001), J. C. C. Mays argues that Gabler's interface, in effecting a compromise between two types of reading, compromises both: "Readers approach texts for different reasons. The distinction is not between scholarly and literary readers, but different occasions for the same readers."[20] To accommodate these different occasions, Mays opted to publish his "Reading" and "Variorum" texts and apparatuses in separate volumes. Even his critical texts, however, deploy extensive textual and interpretive footnotes rather than the clear-text pages and endnotes promoted by Tanselle.

As a rule, editors of electronic editions and archives have simply carried over the logic of footnotes and endnotes. Their hyperlinked notes either appear on the same page as the text or in a separate window. We wanted to integrate text and apparatus seamlessly, to present the reader with a clear text as the first two editions of *Paradise Lost* had done, and yet still make notes available at the touch of a button or the click of a mouse. To this end, we drew up a model for a digital classroom edition wherein explanatory notes appear and disappear as needed, without requiring the reader to scroll, turn pages, or open new windows or frames. In "text-only" mode, the text fills both

[19] "Emerson Behind Barbed Wire," 4.

[20] Mays, ed., *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poetical Works* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), cxliv.

pages (Figure 24). In "annotation mode," notes replace the text on one of the pages (Figure 25). Annotated words and phrases in the text are highlighted—or not—depending on reader preference. This scheme exploits the power of new media to offer students immersive and analytical reading experiences with one edition.

THE MODERNIZATION DILEMMA

After settling the matter of apparatus, we had to decide whether or not to modernize accidentals such as spelling and punctuation. In the first two editions of *Paradise Lost*, the orthography is archaic and the same words are spelled in different ways. The punctuation is rhythmical rather than syntactical, capitalization is haphazard, and italicization of proper names is inconsistent. Most editors suspect that scribes and compositors handled the pointing and orthography, not necessarily due to Milton's blindness, but because this was standard practice in the period.[21] But the possibility remains that some instances reflect Milton's preferences. Given this state of uncertainty, Kastan argues that there are three "intelligible" and "responsible" choices available to an editor of the poem: "one can print accidentals of the poem as they appeared in 1674, print them as one conjectures Milton hoped they would appear, or choose to modernize the accidentals as the procedure for modern readers that makes the text most accessible,

[21] In addition to internal evidence that compositors handled the accidentals of Renaissance texts, we have the testimony of Joseph Moxon's 1683 handbook; see *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*, ed. Herbert Davis and Harry Carter, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 192, 204-05, 215. Milton's nephew Edward Phillips reports that upon visiting his uncle he was often shown verses "which being Written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want Correction as to the Orthography and the Pointing." See Phillips, "The Life of Mr. John Milton," xxxvi. This piece of evidence has been marshaled for and against modernization; while it confirms that Milton was concerned about the accidentals of his poem, it does not prove that he supervised their correction.

producing the least syntactic confusion and visual distraction as it presents the poem's sound and sense."[22] In the 1950s, Helen Darbishire and B. A. Wright pursued the second option.[23] Both scholars claimed to have identified a system of spelling and punctuation inconsistently applied by Milton's agents, and attempted to reconstruct it.[24] The striking difference between the texts produced by Darbishire and Wright, however, proved to be the best argument against their new conjectural approach, summoning shades of Bentley and the dreaded text variorum. Only the first and third options, therefore, are viable today. For Kastan, the dilemma between maintaining fidelity to a historical document (option one) and facilitating an immersive reading experience (option three) can be resolved through consideration of the edition's intended audience. Modernization is the appropriate choice, he concludes, for student readers and thus for classroom editions.

Some editors view Kastan's position as infantilizing, however. Roy Flannagan concedes that a modernized text is easier for students to chew and digest—"a sort of verbal baby food"—but insists that "an old-spelling eclectic text of Milton (that is, a text synthesized from the authoritative readings in manuscripts and printed editions) gives the texture, feel, and look of the original."[25] His argument is self-refuting, however, because

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[22] David Scott Kastan, ed., *Paradise Lost* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2005), lxxii.

[23] Some textual critics might call this option *regularization*. But this term has been used for at least three different procedures: improving the internal consistency of the accidentals, making the accidentals conform to contemporary conventions, and retaining accidentals that seem significant. Only the first procedure corresponds to option two in Kastan's list. The second procedure has always been considered farfetched, and the third is now common practice in modernization.

[24] See volume one of Darbishire, ed., *The Poetical Works of John Milton*; B. A. Wright, ed., *Milton: Poems* (New York: Dutton, 1956).

[25] Roy Flannagan, ed., *John Milton: Paradise Lost* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 59.

the rationale for an "eclectic text" exists only when "the original" does not (and therefore has no texture, feel, or look). In other words, no edition or manuscript constitutes the exclusive locus of originality. Moreover, an "old-spelling text," by definition, reproduces the accidentals of an authoritative document but not its typography or physical format.[26] Visually, therefore, an eclectic, old-spelling text of *Paradise Lost* appears as far removed from an early modern text as it does from a fully modernized text. Many teachers assume, not unreasonably, that the more a modern edition resembles a seventeenth-century edition, the more a modern reader's experience approaches that of a seventeenth century-reader. Yet the truth is actually the reverse, because conventions of printed language that were then familiar and transparent are now foreign and opaque.

Pedagogically speaking, then, editors and teachers must choose between increasing basic comprehension and increasing awareness of historical distance. Since our priority was to narrow the experiential gap between early and late readers of print, we opted to modernize the text of our classroom edition without disrupting the poem's meter. But we recognized that most students would require further accommodation:

> when students hear an instructor declaim passages from [*Paradise Lost*] as they follow along in their textbooks, the thrust of the lines suddenly becomes plainer. …The aural register is especially crucial for the study of [*Paradise Lost*]. Blind Milton composed his epic orally, dictating it to amanuenses and even insisting that he was relaying what the Muse had first dictated to him as he slept. The original text of [*Paradise Lost*], then, was not a mute manuscript but a narrative

[26] See Williams and Abbot, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, 99.

> voice attentively heard and transcribed. Even when present-day students successfully comprehend Milton's poetry during a solitary, silent reading, reading through the eyes alone diminishes the aural impact of the verse and the voice as its medium. Instructors and students now seem to be recognizing that the merely visual reading of [*Paradise Lost*] leaves something to be desired. In recent years an increasing number of marathon group readings of Milton's epic has occurred at colleges and even high schools in the U.S.A. and elsewhere. Such voluntary meetings are unlikely to become standard practice any time soon, however, and classroom time does not permit instructors to read aloud or play a recording of the poem (10,565 lines), even if they recognize that comprehension increases markedly when students both see and hear the text.[27]

Having thought through this pedagogical situation, we adapted the interface design of our classroom edition to correlate an electronic text with an audio track of *Paradise Lost*. We then solicited volunteers to record Book Nine, the selection most often anthologized and assigned to undergraduates. In the spring of 2005, with the aid of a UT-Austin Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services grant, we developed a prototype "audiotext" of Book Nine. This prototype uses Adobe/Macromedia Flash technology to synchronize the audio with a karaoke-style highlight that indicates the line being voiced. Our model for this effect was another Flash-based project at UT, the *Cantar de Mio Cid* website.[28]

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[27] Olin R. Bjork and John P. Rumrich, "The *Paradise Lost* Flash Audiotext" (poster, ACH/LCC Digital Humanities conference, Champaign-Urbana, IL, June 2-8, 2007), http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dh2007/abstracts/xhtml.xq?id=216.

[28] Matthew Bailey, dir., *Cantar de Mio Cid*, http://www.laits.utexas.edu/cid/.

THE RATIONALE OF AUDIOTEXT

Professor Rumrich and I designed the audiotext to compensate for a phenomenon of late print culture. We suspect that the ability of readers to hear poetry in the "mind's ear" has decayed over generations of silent reading. Although readers in Early Modern England sometimes read silently, they lived in a society in which prose oratory and verse recitation remained the primary means of disseminating the word in many official and social contexts. To a large extent, texts were still conceived as recorded utterances, as they had been in manuscript culture. Given their understanding of textuality as material orality, it follows that for many seventeenth-century readers, silently reading *Paradise Lost* was a different psychodynamic experience than it is for us. C.S. Lewis argues that Milton, like Virgil, faced the challenge of making the written or "secondary epic" reproduce some of the effects of oral or "primary epic" and thus engineered the poem to simulate for the solitary reader a ritualistic and incantatory event. Milton makes the printed page "affect us like the voice of a bard chanting in a hall," Lewis writes, and he accomplishes this feat through the "grandeur" or "elevation" of the style. Lewis finds that "this grandeur is produced mainly by three things":

> (1) the use of slightly unfamiliar words and constructions, including archaisms. (2) The use of proper names, not solely nor chiefly for their sound, but because they are the names of splendid, remote, terrible, voluptuous, or celebrated things. They are there to encourage a sweep of the reader's eye over the richness and variety of the world—to supply that *largior aether* which we breathe as long as the poem lasts. (3) Continued allusion to all the sources of heightened interest in

> our sense experience (light, darkness, storm, flowers, jewels, sexual love, and the like), but all over-topped and "managed" with an air of magnanimous austerity.[29]

At first glance, these three attributes would not seem to create the atmosphere of a rite, much less the rhythm of a chant or incantation. Although David Masson referred to the poem's dominant measure as an "Iambic chant,"[30] Milton's frequent use of enjambment and variable placement of caesuras seem incompatible with such a description. For his part, Lewis does not concern himself with prosody but rather with an experiential phenomenon. If readers focus on diction rather than syntax, he argues, they will be carried through the poem as if they were listening to a rhapsodist sing at a rapid pace. Lewis's ingenious analogy between two distinct forms of epic mediation turns the tables on F. R. Leavis, who had criticized *Paradise Lost* for being mechanistic and ritualistic rather than expressive. But as Lewis himself demonstrates, the rhapsodist achieves similar effects through dissimilar techniques: e.g., anaphora, parallelism, stock phrases, and end-stopped verses. Since the primary function of these devices is to accommodate the memories of performers and audiences, Milton employs them only sparingly in *Paradise Lost*. Instead, Lewis finds the poem replete with verbal icons and *visibilia*, words and things seen, that enchant the reader. Most readers of Lewis's *Preface* miss this crucial distinction; if *Paradise Lost* functions as a chant for the eyes, it is precisely because it was not composed as a chant for the ears.

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[29] Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 39. For a more comprehensive schema, see Robert Beum, "So Much Gravity and Ease," in *Language and Style in Milton; a Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of Paradise Lost*, ed. Ronald David Emma and John T. Shawcross (New York: F. Ungar, 1967), 348.

[30] Masson, ed., *The Poetical Works of John Milton*, 3:217.

Paradise Lost makes its own unique appeal to the ear, and not merely to what T.S. Eliot termed the "auditory imagination."[31] Milton's music is not hypnotic or monotonous but rather dramatic and sonorous.[32] As such, it is more commonly compared to baroque "organ music" than to rhythmic chant. Alfred Lord Tennyson dubbed Milton the "God-gifted organ-voice of England" before confessing a preference for his more idyllic and mellifluous passages: "Me rather all that bowery loneliness, / The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring, / And bloom profuse and cedar arches / Charm."[33] Notwithstanding Tennyson's perception of dynamic range in *Paradise Lost*, Leavis and other Miltonoclasts claimed that Milton plays the same heavy pipes and strains regardless of the situation or emotions of the characters. Lewis and other defenders responded that the poem is, after all, an epic. But even Matthew Arnold, who considered Milton and Dante the only post-classical practitioners of "The Grand Style," called Milton a *severe* example.[34] The sublimity of the language tends to trump the meter, even when *Paradise Lost* is heard but not seen. Edwin Guest observed that "few readers are to be met with, who can make the beginning or ending of Milton's lines perceptible to their audience."[35]

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[31] Eliot defines the *auditory imagination* as "the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word." See *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England* (London: Faber, 1933), 118-119.

[32] Though the sonority of Milton's style is universally acknowledged, some critics deny that it is dramatic. See, for example, Rajan, *Paradise Lost & the Seventeenth Century Reader*, 108-31.

[33] "Milton. *Alcaics*," *Cornhill Magazine*, December 1863, 707.

[34] *On Translating Homer. Last Words. A Lecture Given at Oxford* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), 33.

[35] *A History of English Rhythms* (London: W. Pickering, 1838), 529.

Those listening to a competent speaker, however, may perceive the rise and fall of the rhythm more distinctly than when they read the poem. How important, then, is seeing or hearing the lines? In his essay on the verse, Milton contends that "true musical delight… consists onely in apt Numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one Verse into another." Milton typically measures numbers and syllables by lines, but organizes the sense in larger units—periods and verse paragraphs. Readers attempting to parse his syntax, therefore, may not find his lineation helpful. Listeners who allow themselves to forget about his lines altogether, meanwhile, may find that his verse becomes lyrical prose.

Students new to Milton, therefore, should both listen to and read *Paradise Lost*, only then will they be likely to experience its "true musical delight." Eliot once opined that "to extract everything possible from *Paradise Lost*, it would seem necessary to read it in two different ways, first solely for the sound, and second for the sense."[36] This was not intended as a compliment; whereas Eliot detected a fusion between sound and sense in Shakespeare and Dante, he posited a fission in Milton. Christopher Ricks, among others, has effectively disputed this charge,[37] but there is another problem with Eliot's comment. The notion that a person can "extract everything possible" from a work of literature, in one or even several readings, is naive. Indeed, most teachers would be thrilled to discover that their students are reading assigned texts more than once. Critics on both sides of "The Milton Controversy" of the mid-twentieth century were guilty of

[36] "A Note on the Verse of John Milton," *English Studies* 21 (1936): 38.

[37] Ricks responded to Eliot and Leavis with a short monograph: *Milton's Grand Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

fashioning their own monolithic readers. When Lewis refers to "the reader" of *Paradise Lost*, he somehow imagines both a disembodied ideal reader that transcends cultural and chronological differences and "a man" reading "in an armchair" in "his own study."[38] This image does not fit the description of most seventeenth-century readers, and it certainly fails to describe the situation of most readers today. If, as Robert Beum asserts, in *Paradise Lost* "we are given a book with a built-in sound track,"[39] many modern readers will have trouble playing that sound track. Our audiotext *literally* gives students a built-in soundtrack, enabling them to both hear and see the poem simultaneously.

Aristotle determined eloquence necessary due to "the defects of our hearers."[40] We have determined multimedia necessary due to the defects of our readers' auditory imaginations. Not that today's readers are inferior in all respects to early modern ones. Twenty-first century professionals can absorb information with great speed and efficiency from print and Web-based documents. Today's accountants, for example, check financial records by sight (and with computers), whereas "auditing" remained an oral-aural practice throughout the manuscript age.[41] Similarly, proof was read aloud, not compared visually, during the hand-press period.[42] The faith that was once placed in the ear and the memory, therefore, is now placed in the eye and the database. Reading, once

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[38] Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, 39.

[39] "So Much Gravity and Ease," 366.

[40] *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts (New York: Modern Library, 1954), bk. 3, ch. 1, 1404a.

[41] Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Routledge, 1991), 119.

[42] Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 112. The corrector would follow the proof visually and mark the mistakes while his "boy" would read aloud from the copy.

conceived as an indirect form of listening, is now figured as information extraction, and many texts are indexed, annotated, and otherwise designed to facilitate this process. In print and electronic cultures, textual space fulfills the archival and computational functions assigned to mental space in oral and manuscript cultures.

Walter J. Ong argues that electronic cultural forms such as telephony, radio, television, and sound tape have "brought us into an age of 'secondary orality.' This new orality has striking resemblances to the old in its participatory mystique, its fostering of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment, and even its use of formulas."[43] For Ong, secondary orality differs from primary orality in that it emerges from literate society and eschews the seriousness of traditional oratory (and high print culture). "It fosters a new, self-consciously informal style," Ong writes, "since typographic folk believe that oral exchange should normally be informal (oral folk believe it should normally be formal)."[44] If Ong's distinction is valid, our students' positive response to hearing *Paradise Lost* cannot be fully explained by their heavy exposure to secondary oral forms. Despite the resurgence of spoken-word performance, students have never seen or heard anything quite like *Paradise Lost*. Whereas for literate audiences in the seventeenth century, Milton's inversions and "Latinate" constructions such as ablative absolutes were no barrier to comprehension but rather an assertion of his connection to the ancients, his syntax stumbles modern audiences. The last vestiges of

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[43] Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 136. Ong coined the term in "The Literate Orality of Popular Culture Today," a chapter in Walter J. Ong, *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971).

[44] Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 135-36.

oratorical, classical, and multilingual education have vanished from our institutes of higher education. When a good speaker provides the missing inflection, students react with wonder; they never thought English could be made to do *that*.

Given that most students lack training in hearing, much less delivering, a poem or an oration, it is important to make the text and audio available at one site. In fact, recent research by cognitive psychologists suggests that whatever their background, people tend to learn better when they listen to and read the same text, either simultaneously or sequentially.[45] Because the human information processing system is divided between visual and auditory channels, "students are able to increase their effective working memory capacity by processing the verbal message in both modalities."[46] Another benefit of having the same verbal content available in two presentation modes is that when one sense becomes overtaxed, learning can continue in the other mode. In *Paradise Lost*, after Adam has received visions of future events up to and including the flood, Gabriel says to him "Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive / Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine / Must needs impair and weary human sense: / Henceforth what is to come I will relate" (12.8-11). Milton himself relied on others when he found "wisdom at one entrance quite shut out" (3.50). In *An Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642), Milton mentions his habit of rising early to "read good Authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary or memory have his full fraught" (YP 1:885). Since Milton was a

[45] These studies are listed in Roxana Moreno and Richard E. Mayer, "Getting the Message Across: The Role of Verbal Redundancy in Multimedia Explanations" (paper, annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA, April 10-14, 2001), http://www.unm.edu/~moreno/PDFS/AERA01-red.pdf.

[46] Ibid.

schoolmaster when he wrote the pamphlet, John S. Diekhoff argues that the phrase *cause them to be read* refers "to his students, not to a reader," adding that "Milton's blindness is nearly ten years away."[47] But Leah Marcus contends that "he is clearly referring to 'aural' reading for his own edification by a relative, friend, or man hired for the purpose."[48] The fact that Diekhoff's was the standard interpretation for most of the twentieth century reveals a yawning gap between high print and residual oral cultures that has only recently been acknowledged. Though it is common knowledge that the blind Milton authored *Paradise Lost* with a group of amanuenses, according to Edward Phillips, Milton also wrote by dictation prior to going blind.[49] The urtexts, then, of *Paradise Lost* and other Miltonic works consist of voice(s), an insight that is perhaps the main inspiration for our project. The very name of the project, audiotext, calls into question which of the two modalities is primary and which supplemental.

IS THERE A CLASS IN THIS AUDIOTEXT?

If Luxon's site enables readers to bring a reading room into the classroom, our site enables students to bring a classroom into the dorm room. The combination of audio and text seems especially fitting for a classroom (edition), for this is not a quiet space. When reading takes place during a literature class, it often takes the form of a teacher or student reading aloud. The classroom is also a versatile space that can accommodate a

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[47] Diekhoff, ed., *Milton on Himself: Milton's Utterances Upon Himself and His Works*, 2nd ed. (London: Cohen & West, 1966), 75 n8.

[48] *Unediting the Renaissance*, 209.

[49] "The Life of Mr. John Milton," xix.

variety of teaching philosophies and purposes. Given that some lesson plans will require old-spelling texts, we decided that the interface should allow users to display a transcript of our copy-text (the second edition of 1674) in parallel with the reading text. For this "comparison mode," we simulated the original font (Figure 26). Finally, the classroom is a space of student-teacher and student-student interaction. Should our site facilitate online discussion and collaborative analysis of *Paradise Lost*? We ultimately elected not to pursue the classroom metaphor this far, reasoning that such features would grate against another metaphor that we were quite fond of: the book.

The realization that Rumrich and I were designing a digital book came two years after we began working on the project. When we made the decision to build our interface with Flash, a proprietary technology, rather than an "open format" like HTML, we had serious misgivings about this move—digital humanists object to the use of proprietary formats with good reason.[50] But no other program makes it as easy to synchronize an audio track with visual elements within an interactive, online interface.[51] Another advantage of Flash, which only occurred to us after we had created the Book Nine

[50] Adobe Systems Incorporated markets Flash, a multimedia authoring tool, and freely distributes Flash Player, a plug-in that enables Web browsers to play files published in Flash's SWF format. HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) is the standard document format of the Web. The HTML specification is openly maintained and published by international standards organizations.

[51] Digital humanists prefer open formats because the longevity of proprietary file formats is tied to the marketability of the software that creates them. If, for example, Adobe discontinues Flash, its FLA and SWF formats would soon be uneditable and unplayable, respectively. Furthermore, corporations rarely release the source code of proprietary software or formats even to paid and registered users. This policy, though justifiable from a commercial standpoint, stifles the atmosphere of sharing and creativity surrounding the development of open-source software and standards. The World Wide Web consortium predicts that an application combining its SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) and SMIL (Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language) specifications will soon offer an open-standard alternative to Flash. To reduce this possibility, Adobe has released the SWF specification to outside developers, with some stipulations.

prototype, is that it generates a file that runs both on and off line.[52] Web sites composed with open formats, on the other hand, often require Internet access for full or even partial functionality. Until wireless connectivity becomes a public utility, this limitation will render Web sites arguably less accessible than physical books, which only require a light source. The ideal electronic edition, we concluded, is not a Web site *per se* but rather a downloadable digital book freely available at a Web site. In this dispensation, users can keep a copy of the edition on their desktop and, should they find themselves at a different computer, read the edition online.[53] To make these experiences equivalent and to rivet student attention on the text, we eschewed external links.

Re-conceiving the project in this seemingly retrograde fashion—as a book individually possessed by each student in a class—suggested that we make it a customizable object rather than a center for collaboration. To this end, we added a "your notes" mode that allows students to edit and save their own notes for each page (Figure 27).[54] This mode reproduces a capacity of print that most electronic texts fail to provide—space for readers' own annotative marginalia. Unlike similar features in Blackboard and other learning management systems, the mode neither requires identification nor provides a mechanism whereby students can read and comment on each other's notes. It thus represents a significant departure from the "Web 2.0" movement,

[52] This "movie" file can also be configured to contain the player, in which case it becomes an executable application called a "projector."

[53] Adobe PDF files, for example, are often dispensed in this way.

[54] These notes are stored on the student's computer in a "local shared object" file, from which they are then imported by the Flash player for each new session. Unlike Web "cookies," the data in local shared objects are usable on and off line, but like cookies they are tied to a computer rather than a user.

which embraces the public sharing of personal opinion.[55] Teachers who ask students to keep private or semi-private reading journals, however, may find this mode appealing.

For my own part, I prefer in-class and online discussion of literary texts to reading journals, and I bristle at the thought of marring a book's pristine pages with fluorescent highlights or marginal scribbles. The "your notes" mode, therefore, stands as an example of how the project evolved in ways we neither anticipated nor desired. The current prototype reflects teacher and student feedback as much as our own initial design. If we had developed the project in the usual order, with text encoding first and interface design last, it would have taken several years before we were in a position to test, assess, and modify it. Not that developers of other digital humanities projects write code in the dark without an inkling of what the interface will look like. Shining examples now exist. And even if this were not the case, there is something noble about the attempt to demarcate the logical and material structures of humanities data without the contamination of a representation scheme. The inverse procedure, as we are now discovering, is not without its perils. If and when we complete the first "pedagogical" phase of the project (all twelve books), we had originally planned to move on to a second "scholarly" phase involving text encoding and the incorporation of a search engine. But at present, most search engines only function online. Unless technology progresses apace, therefore, we may have to choose between preserving the project's offline integrity and configuring it to respond to research queries.

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[55] See Tim O'Reilly, "What is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software," Oreilly.com, http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html.

Conclusion

In October 2005, "Milton-L," an email-list serve dedicated to Milton Studies, was abuzz with news of a live-action film version of *Paradise Lost*, now scheduled for release in 2009. Some list members expressed a concern that much of the verbal text would be lost in adaptation. Diane K. McColley admitted that

> the idea of a film version of *Paradise Lost* horrifies me. Images stick in people's heads and become icons that disable the imagination, which words leave free to re-see over and over. And I should think the sounds and tones of the verbal extracts would often need to provide a fixed interpretation of puns and nuances and ambiguities such as those this list so fruitfully discusses.[1]

McColley's fear is not that people will watch the film instead of reading the book, but rather that they will hear and see the movie in their heads while reading *Paradise Lost*. Given that she privileges the visible text, one wonders if McColley would have chastised Milton himself for the sounds and tones in which he dictated the poem to his amanuenses. McColley's objection also implies that a scholarly list-serve discussion, and by extension articles and monographs, are less likely than a film to "disable the imagination" or "provide fixed interpretation of puns and nuances and ambiguities." Aesthetic objects, it seems, compete with each other on one level, while critical discourse operates on another. McColley's distinction holds up, I believe, if not for the reasons she articulates, then for vulgar numerical reasons. In scholarly discussion, critics do not refrain from providing

[1] Email to Milton-L mailing list, November 21, 2005, http://lists.richmond.edu/pipermail/milton-l/2005-November/002872.html.

"fixed" interpretations, but the total volume of such interpretations diminishes the influence of each individual critique. In contrast, only one *Paradise Lost* film threatens to usurp the function of the reader's aural and visual imagination in the near future.

McColley's email also registers her longstanding concern about the potential of static images to perform the reader's work of visualization. Prior to reading *Paradise Lost*, readers are likely to have seen one or more illustrations depicting the Fall of Man. In her monograph on *Milton's Eden and the Visual Arts*, McColley attempts to offset this contamination by bombarding the student of Milton with images of Eden both before and after the fall, lest some artistic representation hold court over others.[2] In McColley's view, a responsible teacher keeps a literary work open to manifold interpretations by her students. Films, illustrations, and vocal performances count as rival interpretations of the work that must either be shunned or counterbalanced. For George Klawitter, on the other hand, the "basic problem with illustration" is not that it frees students from the task of visualization but that "when the author and illustrator are not the same person…it brings to a text an outsider's vision and thus 'guides' readers to 'envision' a poem in much the same way as the outsider-illustrator."[3] In this view of the matter, if Milton had somehow managed to leave behind his own sketches of episodes from *Paradise Lost*, or if his dictation had miraculously been preserved on audiotape instead of paper, these authorial renderings would be unproblematic textual supplements.

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[2] *A Gust for Paradise: Milton's Eden and the Visual Arts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), xiv.

[3] "John Martin's Revolution and Grandeur: A New Direction for Milton's Early Illustrators," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 24 (1998): 91.

The fact that Milton left behind no such artifacts licenses and encourages us to find inventive and productive ways to fill the void with a diversity of oral and visual interpretations. Many artists and performers have risen to the challenge, with varying degrees of success. Teachers can either draw on this tradition or ask students to recite or visually paraphrase passages. When students encounter an amateur rendition, professional illustration, or audio recording, it can be pedagogically productive to ask them to discuss the ways in which it changes or challenges their conceptions of the work. In the case of the Book Nine audiotext prototype, some users have expressed surprise that the performers of Adam and Eve have American and British accents respectively. Pronunciation decisions—such as where to place the emphasis and whether or not to accentuate the assonance and alliteration—also affect the meaning.

A long-term solution to the dictatorial influence of individual textual supplements would be the construction of an online *Paradise Lost* variorum. Not the text variorum that Swift feared would create chaos, but rather a "social-text variorum" configurable by users. The interface of this variorum would allow readers to design their own editions, selecting among modernized and old-spelling texts, transcripts and facsimiles, critical and explanatory apparatuses, footnotes and endnotes, illustrations and audio recordings. The concept of a social-text variorum, therefore, differs from an archive because it refuses to confine a work to the material culture contemporaneous with its author. By including modernized texts and audio performances, especially those "born digital,"[4] editors

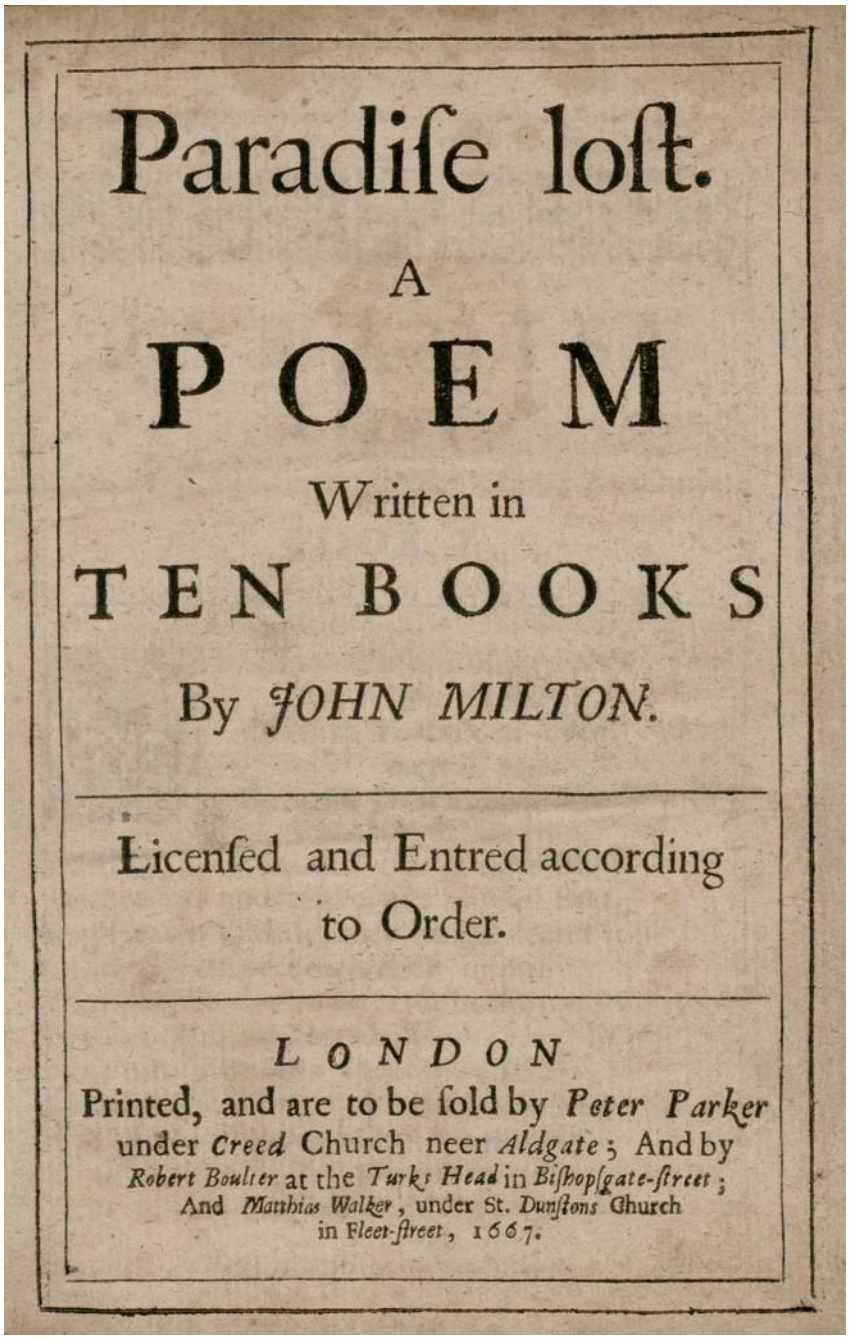
[4] This phrase, possibly coined by Marcia Stepanek in 1998, refers to information that never existed on paper prior to its electronic incarnation. By extension, images never existing on film and audio never existing on analog media prior to their lives in cyberspace are "born digital."

represent a work of literature as a socially produced phenomenon that cannot be archived because the constituent objects are still accumulating. In comparison to this open-ended approach, the archival practice of most of the current projects in the Digital Humanities ultimately contradicts social text-theory, despite the fact that many of the editors involved are social-text critics. Like intentionalist critics, they long for textual definitiveness, but their hope is grounded in the definitive archive rather than the definitive edition.

The realization of a social-text variorum will require, fittingly, a social production process involving an unprecedented level of cooperation among scholars, publishers, and archivists. To overcome the technical and financial barriers—perhaps through some combination of private and corporate donations, institutional funding, and/or subscription fees—the field of textual studies must first undergo a new paradigm shift toward an interest in digital textuality itself, not merely as a means of studying print literature and other material artifacts. Designers of a social-text variorum may choose to embrace the Web 2.0 movement by allowing users to upload and share with others their own texts, notes, illustrations, and audio recordings. Developers at the University of Virginia have assembled a framework to enable these types of interactions among scholars, and a more pedagogically- oriented system is in the planning stage at the University of Texas.[5] These tools promise to allow readers, like writers and editors before them, to tag Milton or another author's words with their own interpolations and connections.

[5] Bethany Nowviskie and the ARP (Applied Research in Patacriticism) group at the University of Virginia maintain the Collex system, which is the engine that powers NINES (a Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-Century Electronic Scholarship); see http://www.nines.org. Samuel Baker's eComma project at the University of Texas at Austin recently received an NEH Digital Humanities Initiative grant but is not yet online.

Figures



Paradiſe loſt.

A

POEM

Written in

TEN BOOKS

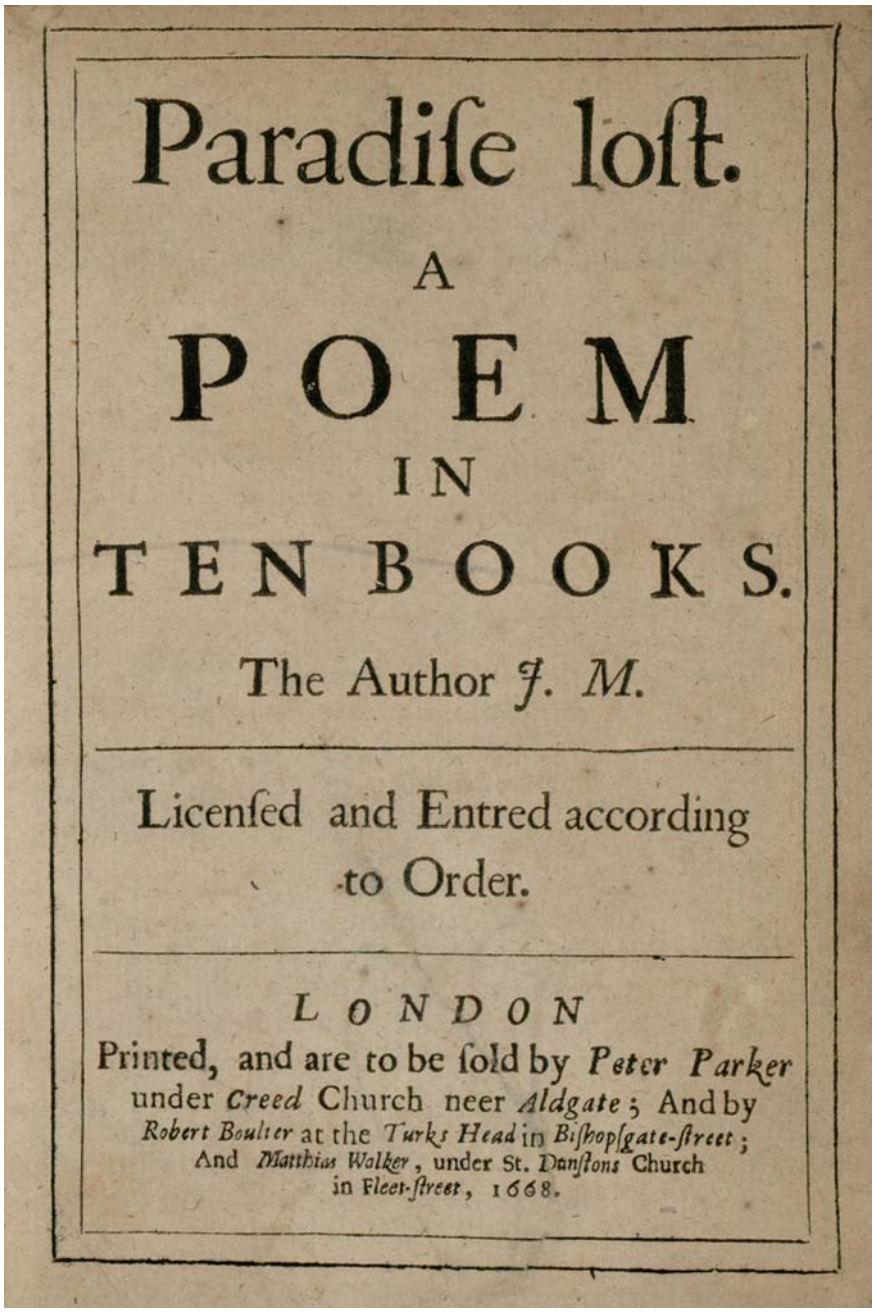
By *JOHN MILTON.*

Licenſed and Entred according to Order.

LONDON

Printed, and are to be ſold by *Peter Parker* under *Creed* Church neer *Aldgate*; And by *Robert Boulter* at the *Turks Head* in *Biſhopſgate-ſtreet*; And *Mathias Walker*, under St. *Dunſtons* Church in *Fleet-ſtreet*, 1667.

Fig. 1. Title Page of First Edition, First Issue
(Harry Ransom Center, Pforzheimer 716)



Paradiſe loſt.

A

POEM

IN

TEN BOOKS.

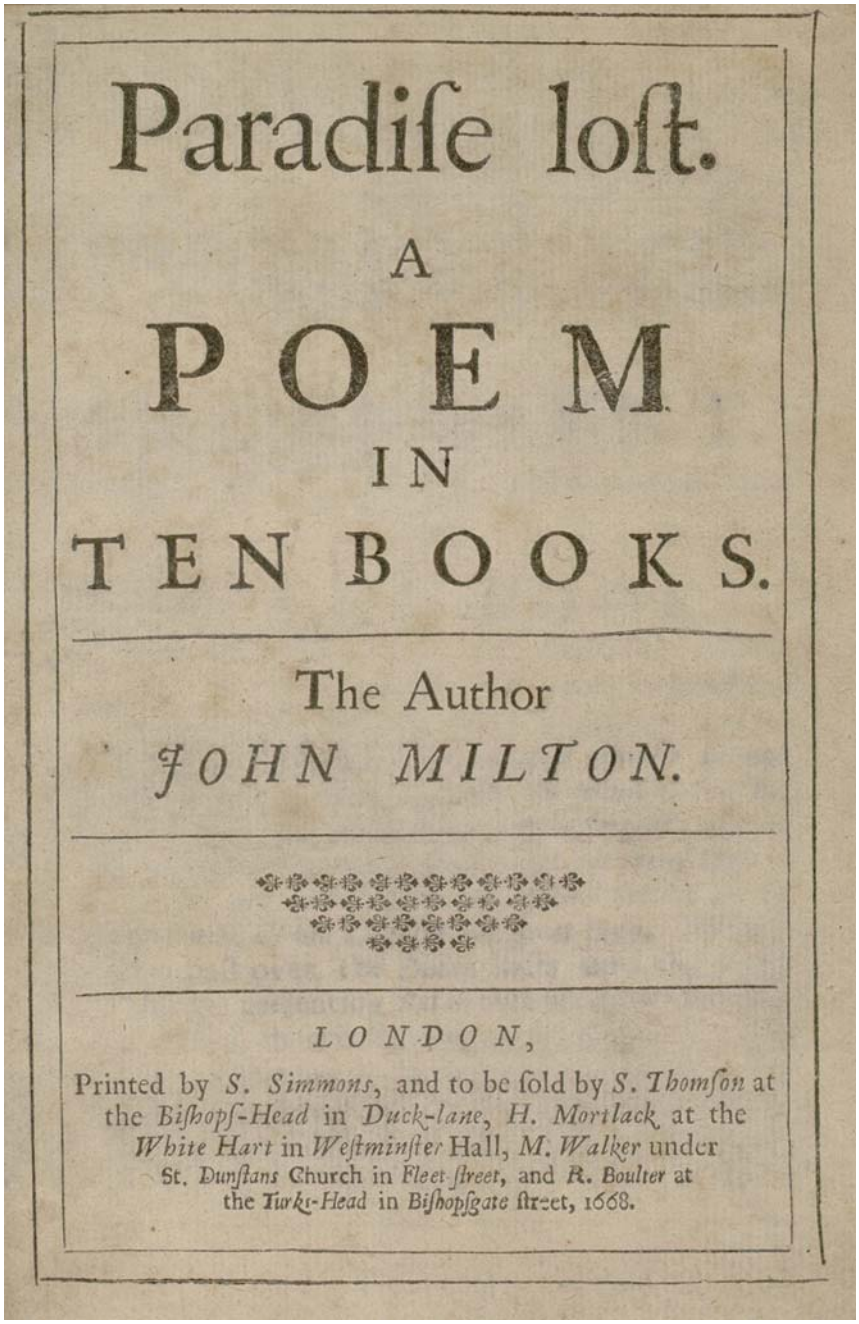
The Author *J. M.*

Licenſed and Entred according to Order.

LONDON

Printed, and are to be ſold by *Peter Parker* under *Creed* Church neer *Aldgate*; And by *Robert Boulter* at the *Turks Head* in *Biſhopſgate-ſtreet*; And *Matthias Walker*, under St. *Dunſtons* Church in *Fleet-ſtreet*, 1668.

Fig. 2. Title Page of First Edition, Second Issue
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2138)



Paradiſe loſt.

A POEM IN TEN BOOKS.

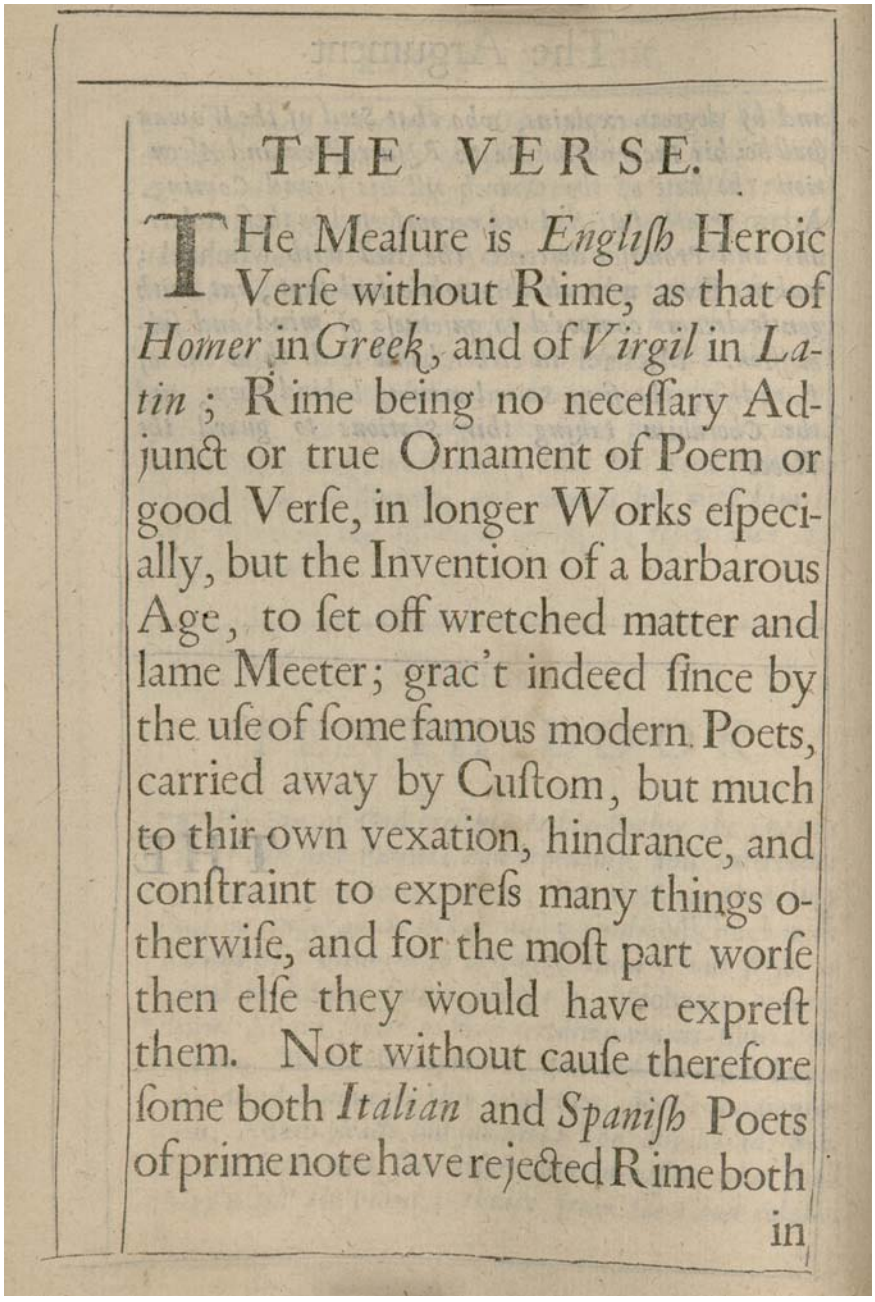
The Author

JOHN MILTON.

LONDON,

Printed by *S. Simmons*, and to be ſold by *S. Thomſon* at the *Biſhopſ-Head* in *Duck-lane*, *H. Mortlack* at the *White Hart* in *Weſtminſter* Hall, *M. Walker* under St. *Dunſtans* Church in *Fleet-ſtreet*, and *R. Boulter* at the *Turk's-Head* in *Biſhopſgate* ſtreet, 1668.

Fig. 3. Title Page of First Edition, Third Issue
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)

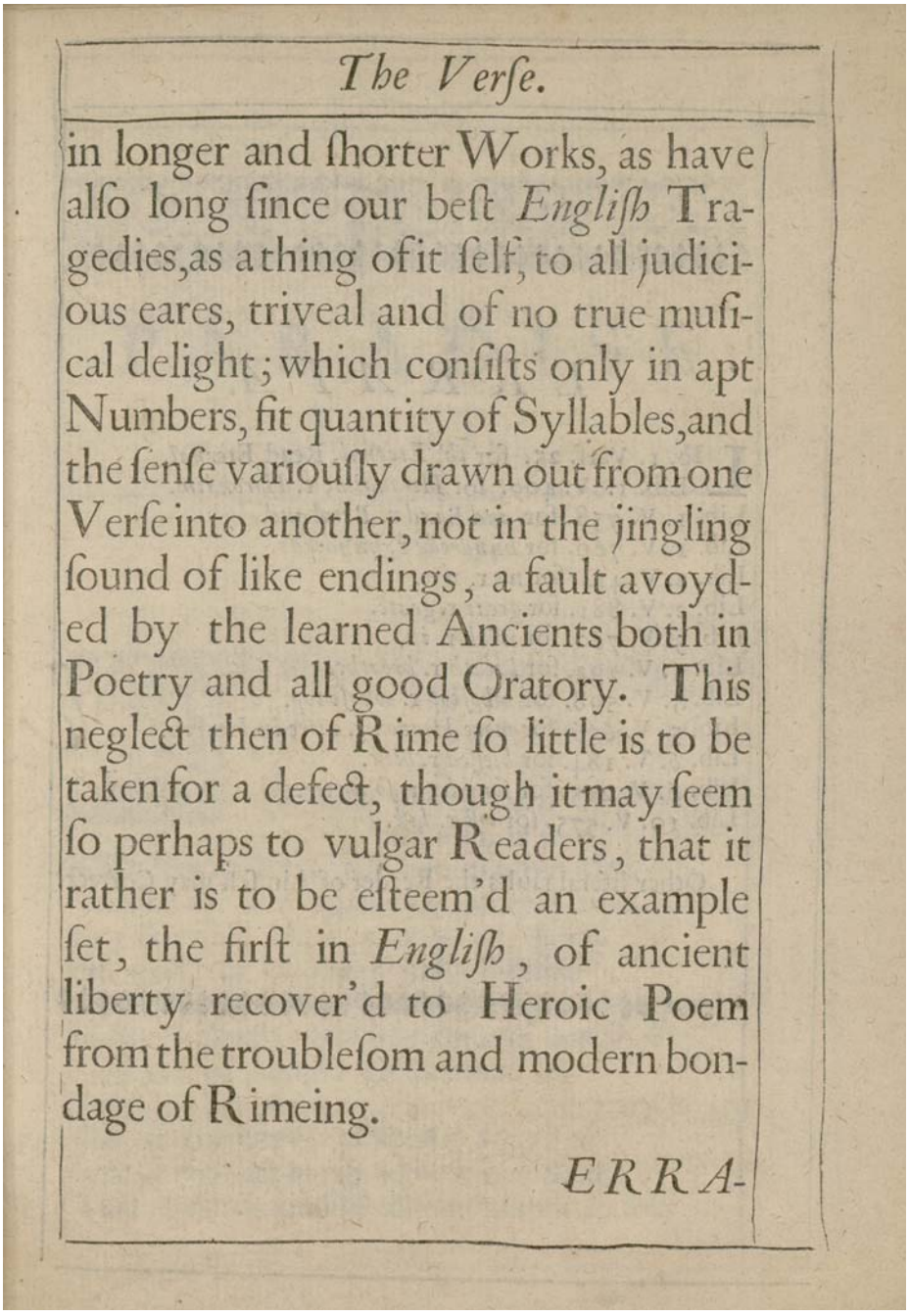


THE VERSE.

THe Meaſure is *Engliſh* Heroic Verſe without Rime, as that of *Homer* in *Greek*, and of *Virgil* in *Latin*; Rime being no neceſſary Adjunct or true Ornament of Poem or good Verſe, in longer Works eſpecially, but the Invention of a barbarous Age, to ſet off wretched matter and lame Meeter; grac't indeed ſince by the uſe of ſome famous modern Poets, carried away by Cuſtom, but much to thir own vexation, hindrance, and conſtraint to expreſs many things otherwiſe, and for the moſt part worſe then elſe they would have expreſt them. Not without cauſe therefore ſome both *Italian* and *Spaniſh* Poets of prime note have rejected Rime both

in

Fig. 4. First Page of Essay on the Verse
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)

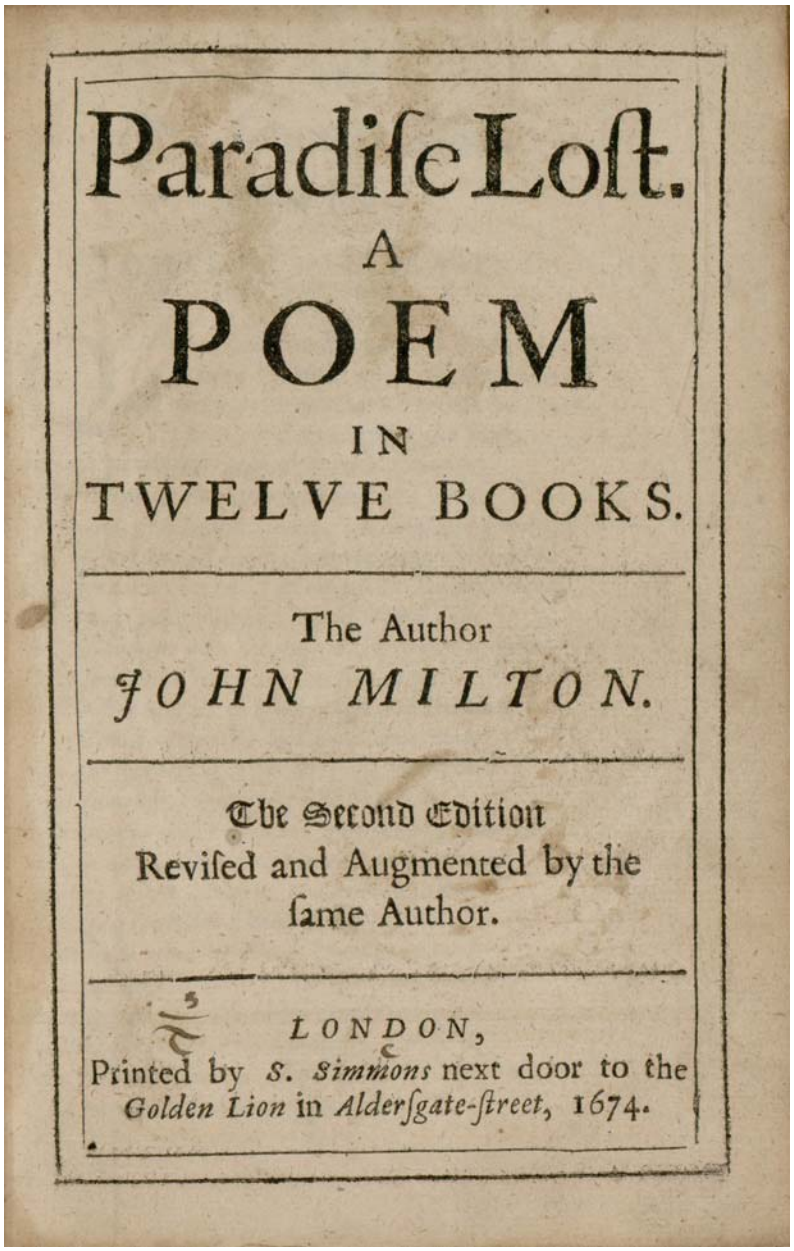


The Verſe.

in longer and ſhorter Works, as have alſo long ſince our beſt *Engliſh* Tragedies, as a thing of it ſelf, to all judicious eares, triveal and of no true muſical delight; which conſiſts only in apt Numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the ſenſe variouſly drawn out from one Verſe into another, not in the jingling ſound of like endings, a fault avoyded by the learned Ancients both in Poetry and all good Oratory. This neglect then of Rime ſo little is to be taken for a defect, though it may ſeem ſo perhaps to vulgar Readers, that it rather is to be eſteem'd an example ſet, the firſt in *Engliſh*, of ancient liberty recover'd to Heroic Poem from the troubleſom and modern bondage of Rimeing.

ERRA-

Fig. 5. Second Page of Essay on the Verse
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



Paradiſe Loſt.
A
POEM
IN
TWELVE BOOKS.

The Author
JOHN MILTON.

The Second Edition
Reviſed and Augmented by the
ſame Author.

LONDON,
Printed by S. Simmons next door to the
Golden Lion in Alderſgate-ſtreet, 1674.

Fig. 6. Title Page of Second Edition, First Issue
(Harry Ransom Center, OCLC 588416)

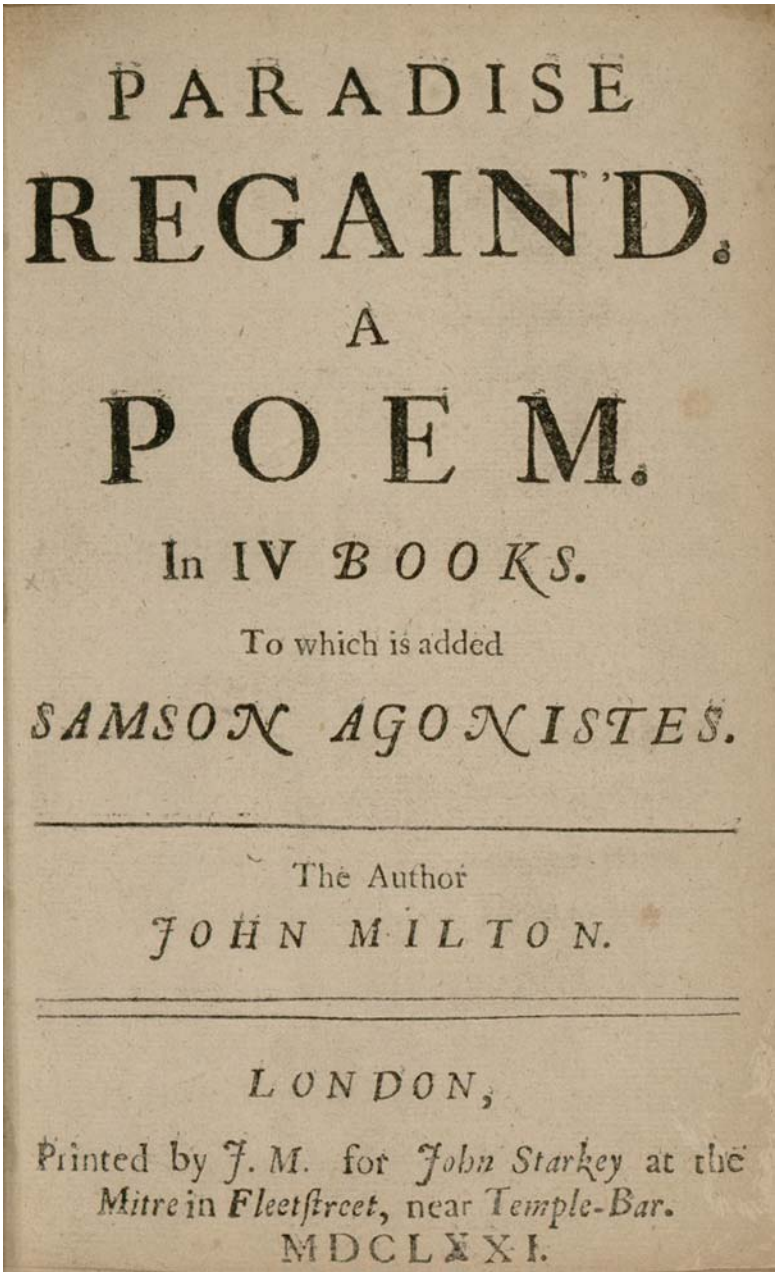
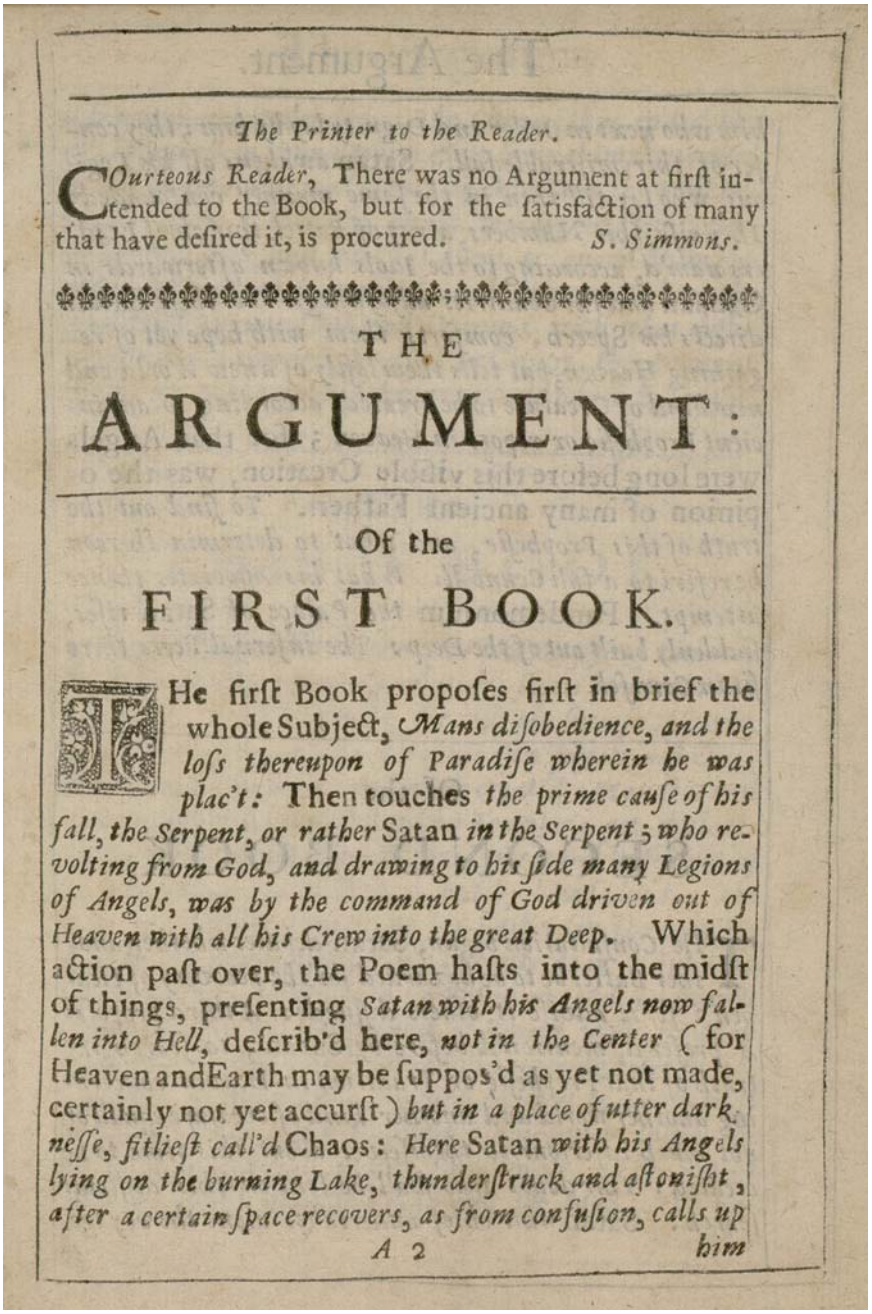

PARADISE
REGAIN'D.
A
POEM.
In IV BOOKS.
To which is added
SAMSON AGONISTES.
The Author
JOHN MILTON.
LONDON,
Printed by J. M. for John Starkey at the
Mitre in Fleetstreet, near Temple-Bar.
MDCLXXI.

Fig. 7. Title Page of *Paradise Regained-Samson Agonistes*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wrenn Library)



The Printer to the Reader.

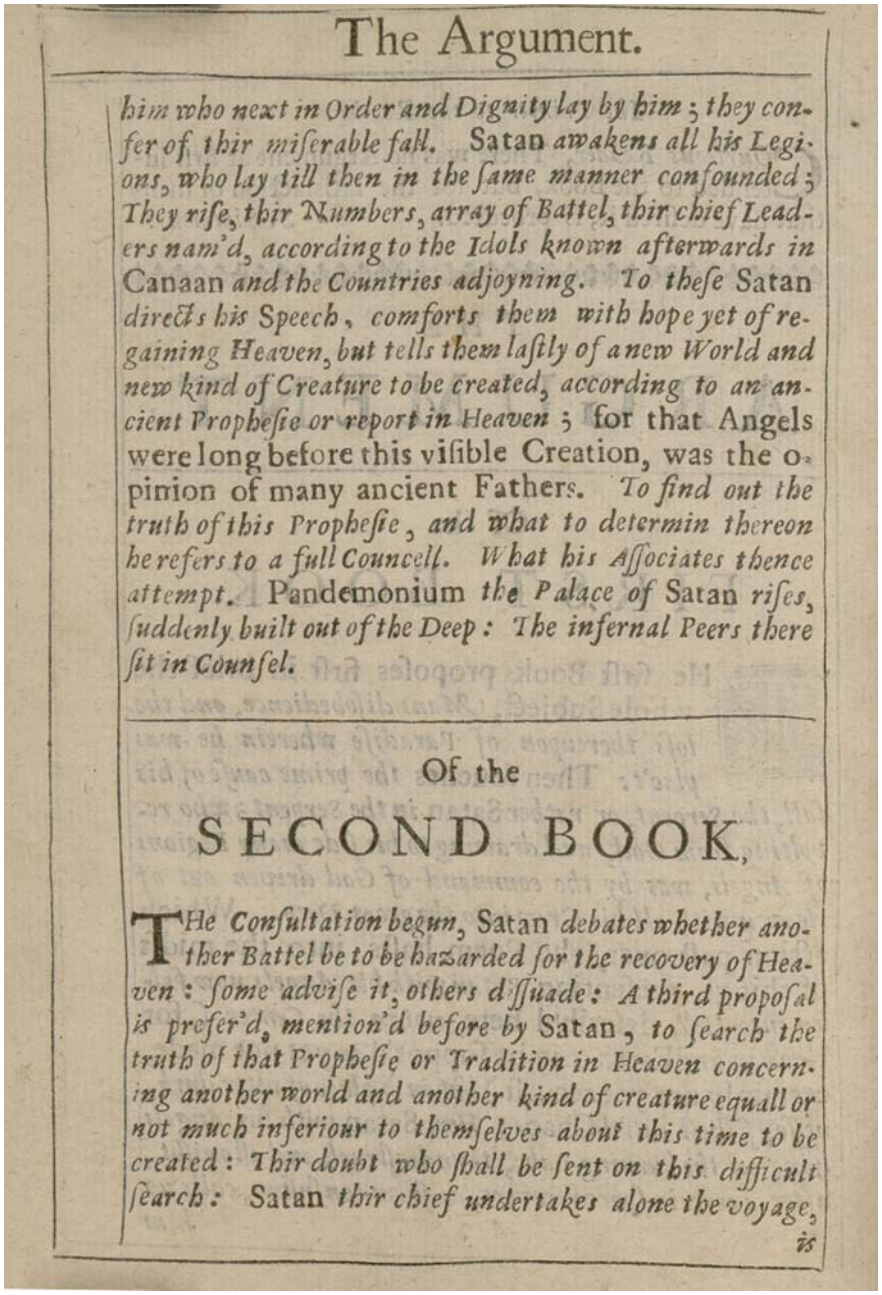
COurteous *Reader*, There was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, is procured. *S. Simmons.*

THE ARGUMENT:

Of the FIRST BOOK.

THe first Book proposes first in brief the whole Subject, *Mans disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was plac't:* Then touches *the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather* Satan *in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many Legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his Crew into the great Deep.* Which action past over, the Poem hasts into the midst of things, presenting *Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell,* described here, *not in the Center* (for Heaven and Earth may be suppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accurst) *but in a place of utter darkenesse, fitliest call'd* Chaos: *Here* Satan *with his Angels lying on the burning Lake, thunderstruck and astonisht, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up*

Fig. 8. First page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument.

him who next in Order and Dignity lay by him; they confer of thir miſerable fall. Satan *awakens all his Legions, who lay till then in the ſame manner confounded; They riſe, thir Numbers, array of Battel, thir chief Leaders nam'd, according to the Idols known afterwards in* Canaan *and the Countries adjoyning. To theſe* Satan *directs his* Speech, *comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them laſtly of a new World and new kind of Creature to be created, according to an ancient Propheſie or report in Heaven;* for that Angels were long before this viſible Creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. *To find out the truth of this Propheſie, and what to determin thereon he refers to a full Councell. What his Aſſociates thence attempt.* Pandemonium *the Palace of* Satan *riſes, ſuddenly built out of the Deep: The infernal Peers there ſit in Counſel.*

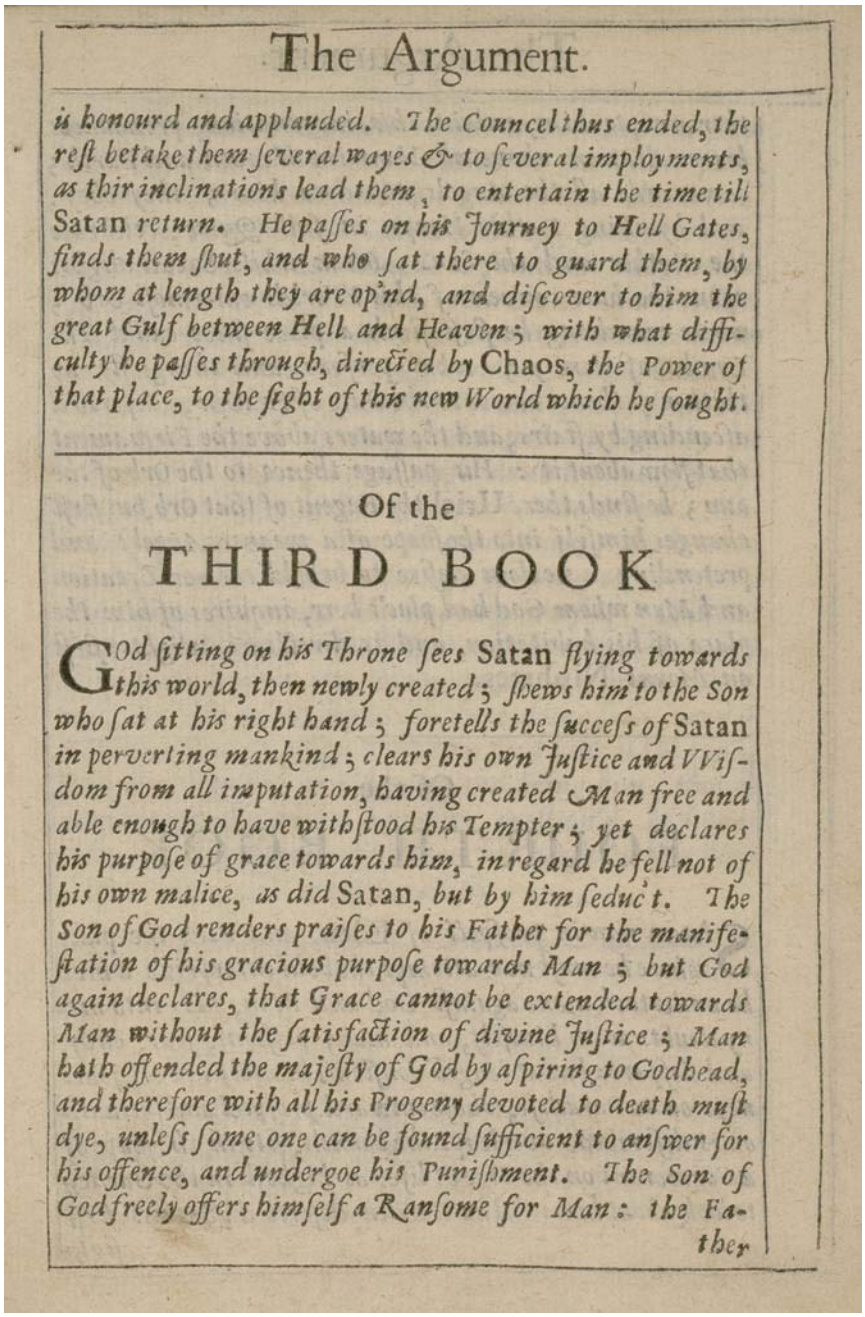
Of the

SECOND BOOK.

THe *Conſultation begun,* Satan *debates whether another Battel be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: ſome adviſe it, others diſſuade: A third propoſal is prefer'd, mention'd before by* Satan, *to ſearch the truth of that Propheſie or Tradition in Heaven concerning another world and another kind of creature equall or not much inferiour to themſelves about this time to be created: Thir doubt who ſhall be ſent on this difficult ſearch:* Satan *thir chief undertakes alone the voyage,*

is

Fig. 9. Second Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument.

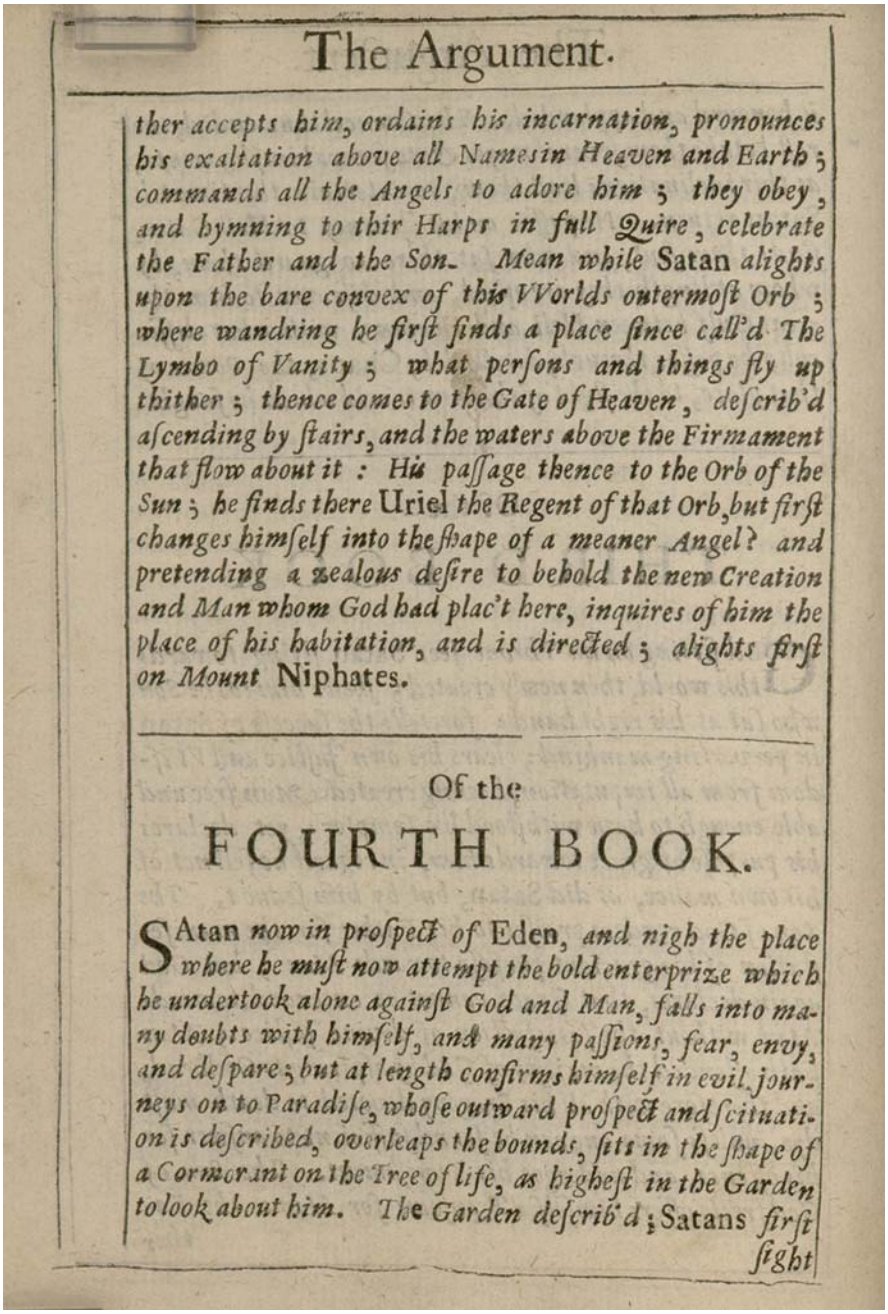
is honourd and applauded. The Councel thus ended, the reſt betake them ſeveral wayes & to ſeveral imployments, as thir inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan *return. He paſſes on his Journey to Hell Gates, finds them ſhut, and who ſat there to guard them, by whom at length they are op'nd, and diſcover to him the great Gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he paſſes through, directed by* Chaos, *the Power of that place, to the ſight of this new World which he ſought.*

Of the
THIRD BOOK

God ſitting on his Throne ſees Satan *flying towards this world, then newly created; ſhews him to the Son who ſat at his right hand; foretells the ſucceſs of* Satan *in perverting mankind; clears his own Juſtice and VViſdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withſtood his Tempter; yet declares his purpoſe of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did* Satan, *but by him ſeduc't. The Son of God renders praiſes to his Father for the manifeſtation of his gracious purpoſe towards Man; but God again declares, that Grace cannot be extended towards Man without the ſatisfaction of divine Juſtice; Man hath offended the majeſty of God by aſpiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his Progeny devoted to death muſt dye, unleſs ſome one can be found ſufficient to anſwer for his offence, and undergoe his Puniſhment. The Son of God freely offers himſelf a Ranſome for Man: the Fa-*

ther

Fig. 10. Third Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument.

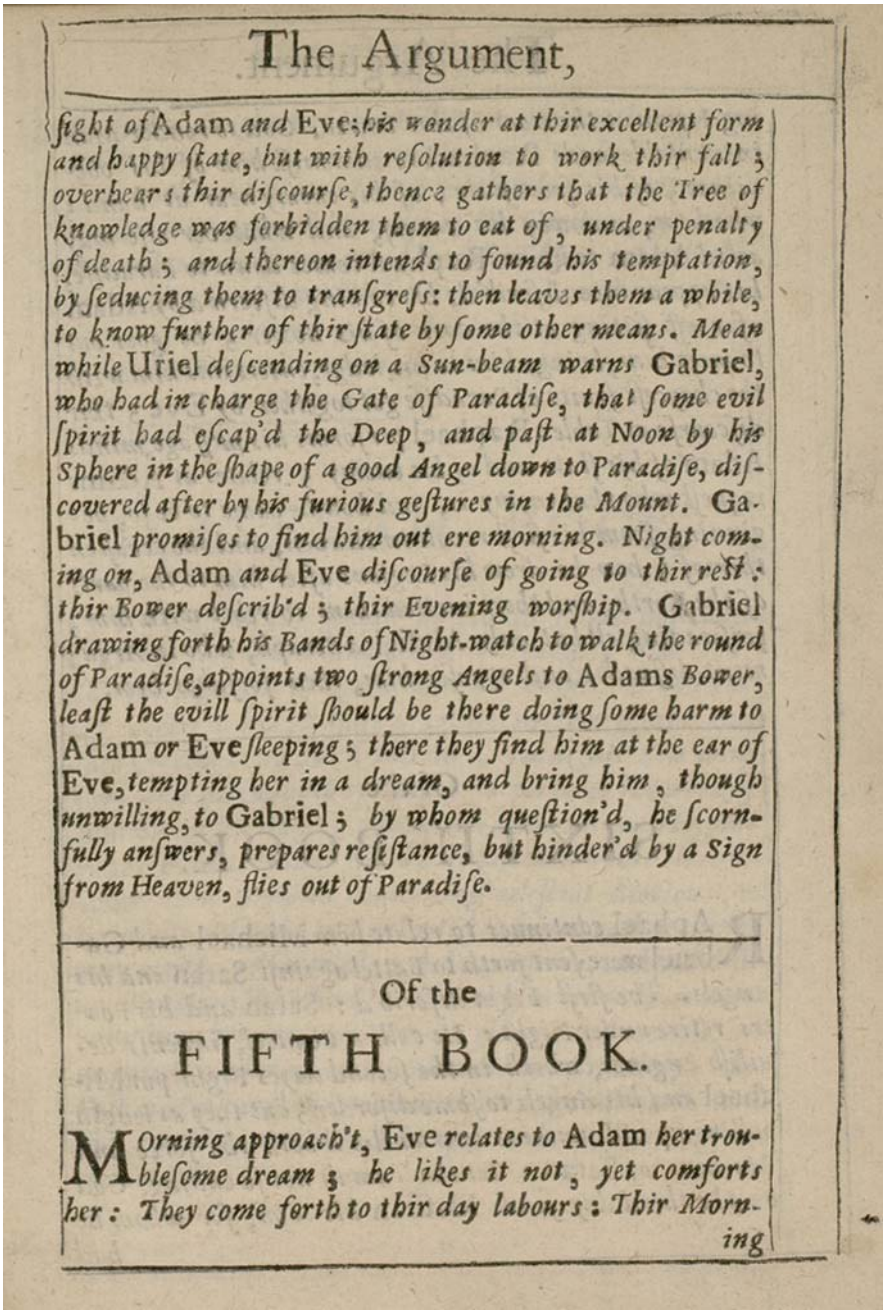
ther accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all Names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the Angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to thir Harps in full Quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while Satan *alights upon the bare convex of this VVorlds outermoſt Orb; where wandring he firſt finds a place ſince call'd The Lymbo of Vanity; what perſons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the Gate of Heaven, deſcrib'd aſcending by ſtairs, and the waters above the Firmament that flow about it: His paſſage thence to the Orb of the Sun; he finds there* Uriel *the Regent of that Orb, but firſt changes himſelf into the ſhape of a meaner Angel; and pretending a zealous deſire to behold the new Creation and Man whom God had plac't here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights firſt on Mount* Niphates.

Of the

FOURTH BOOK.

SAtan *now in proſpect of* Eden, *and nigh the place where he muſt now attempt the bold enterprize which he undertook alone againſt God and Man, falls into many doubts with himſelf, and many paſſions, fear, envy, and deſpare; but at length confirms himſelf in evil, journeys on to Paradiſe, whoſe outward proſpect and ſituation is deſcribed, overleaps the bounds, ſits in the ſhape of a Cormorant on the Tree of life, as higheſt in the Garden to look about him. The Garden deſcrib'd;* Satans *firſt ſight*

Fig. 11. Fourth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument,

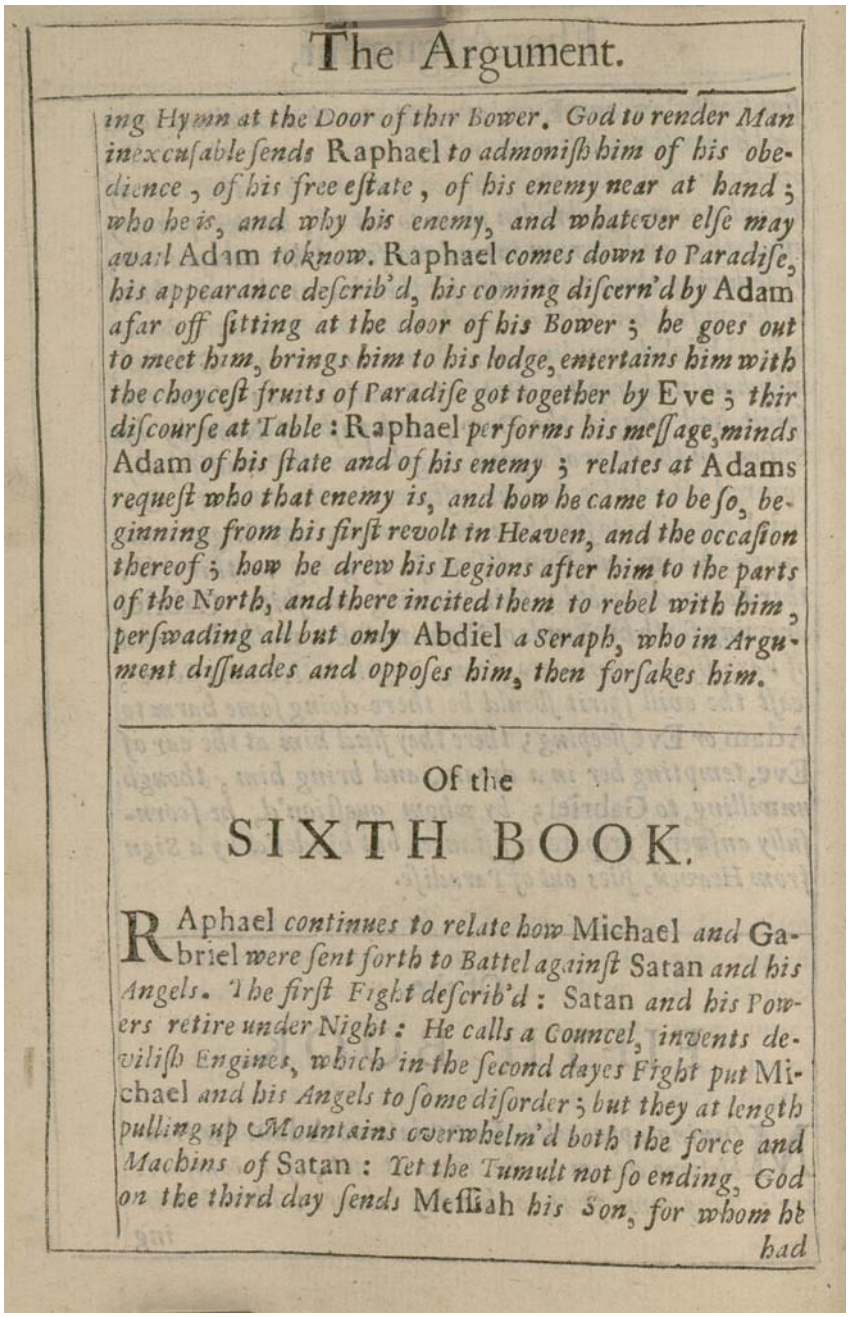
ſight of Adam *and* Eve; *his wonder at thir excellent form and happy ſtate, but with reſolution to work thir fall; overhears thir diſcourſe, thence gathers that the Tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by ſeducing them to tranſgreſs: then leaves them a while, to know further of thir ſtate by ſome other means. Mean while* Uriel *deſcending on a Sun-beam warns* Gabriel, *who had in charge the Gate of Paradiſe, that ſome evil ſpirit had eſcap'd the Deep, and paſt at Noon by his Sphere in the ſhape of a good Angel down to Paradiſe, diſcovered after by his furious geſtures in the Mount.* Gabriel *promiſes to find him out ere morning. Night coming on,* Adam *and* Eve *diſcourſe of going to thir reſt: thir Bower deſcrib'd; thir Evening worſhip.* Gabriel *drawing forth his Bands of Night-watch to walk the round of Paradiſe, appoints two ſtrong Angels to* Adams *Bower, leaſt the evill ſpirit ſhould be there doing ſome harm to* Adam *or* Eve *ſleeping; there they find him at the ear of* Eve, *tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to* Gabriel; *by whom queſtion'd, he ſcornfully anſwers, prepares reſiſtance, but hinder'd by a Sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradiſe.*

Of the

FIFTH BOOK.

Morning approach't, Eve *relates to* Adam *her troubleſome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: They come forth to thir day labours: Thir Morning*

Fig. 12. Fifth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument.

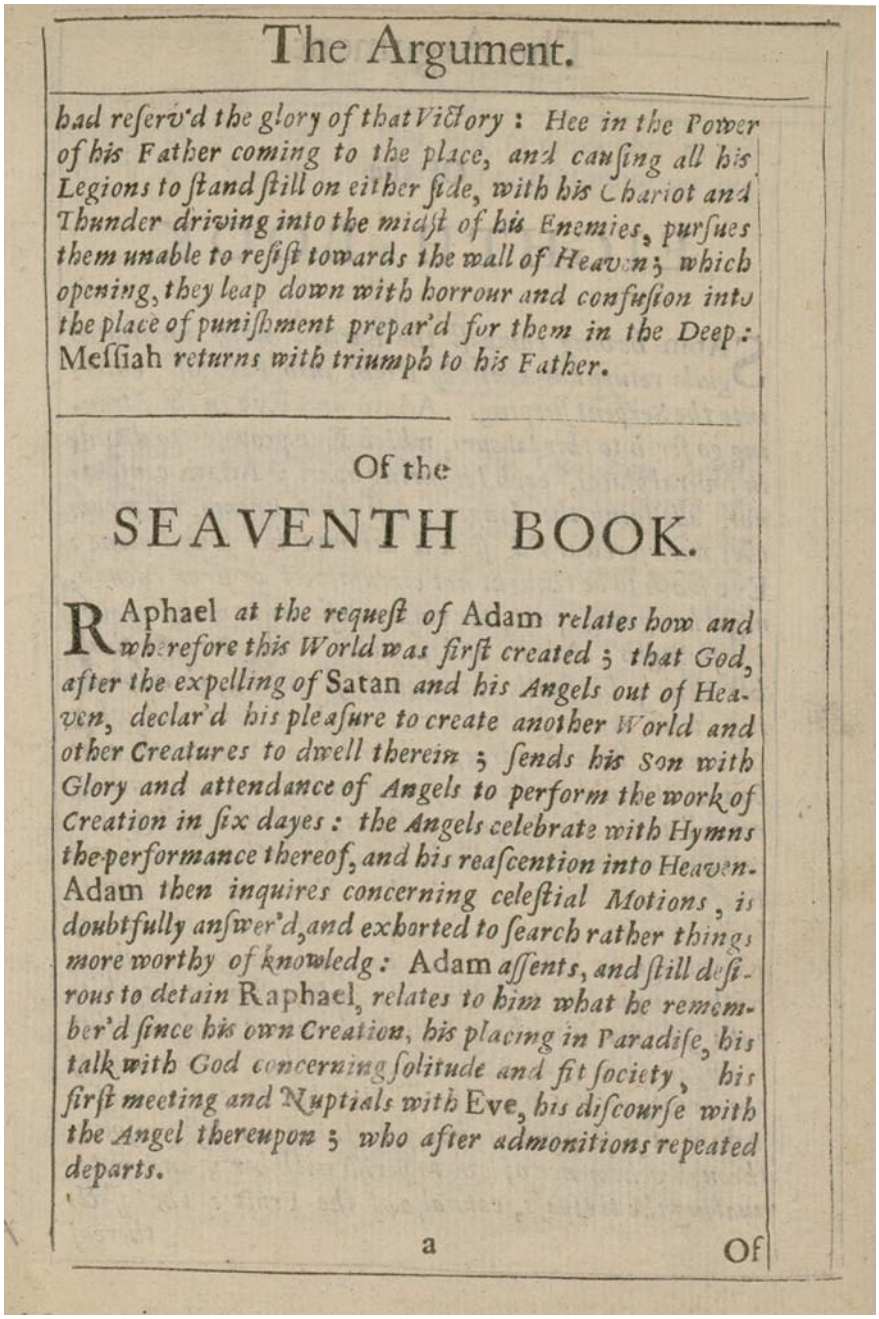
ing Hymn at the Door of thir Bower. God to render Man inexcuſable ſends Raphael *to admoniſh him of his obedience, of his free eſtate, of his enemy near at hand; who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever elſe may avail* Adam *to know.* Raphael *comes down to Paradiſe, his appearance deſcrib'd, his coming diſcern'd by* Adam *afar off ſitting at the door of his Bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choyceſt fruits of Paradiſe got together by* Eve; *thir diſcourſe at Table:* Raphael *performs his meſſage, minds* Adam *of his ſtate and of his enemy; relates at* Adams *requeſt who that enemy is, and how he came to be ſo, beginning from his firſt revolt in Heaven, and the occaſion thereof; how he drew his Legions after him to the parts of the North, and there incited them to rebel with him, perſwading all but only* Abdiel *a Seraph, who in Argument diſſuades and oppoſes him, then forſakes him.*

Of the

SIXTH BOOK.

RAphael *continues to relate how* Michael *and* Gabriel *were ſent forth to Battel againſt* Satan *and his Angels. The firſt Fight deſcrib'd:* Satan *and his Powers retire under Night: He calls a Councel, invents deviliſh Engines, which in the ſecond dayes Fight put* Michael *and his Angels to ſome diſorder; but they at length pulling up Mountains overwhelm'd both the force and Machins of* Satan: *Yet the Tumult not ſo ending, God on the third day ſends* Meſſiah *his Son, for whom he had*

Fig. 13. Sixth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



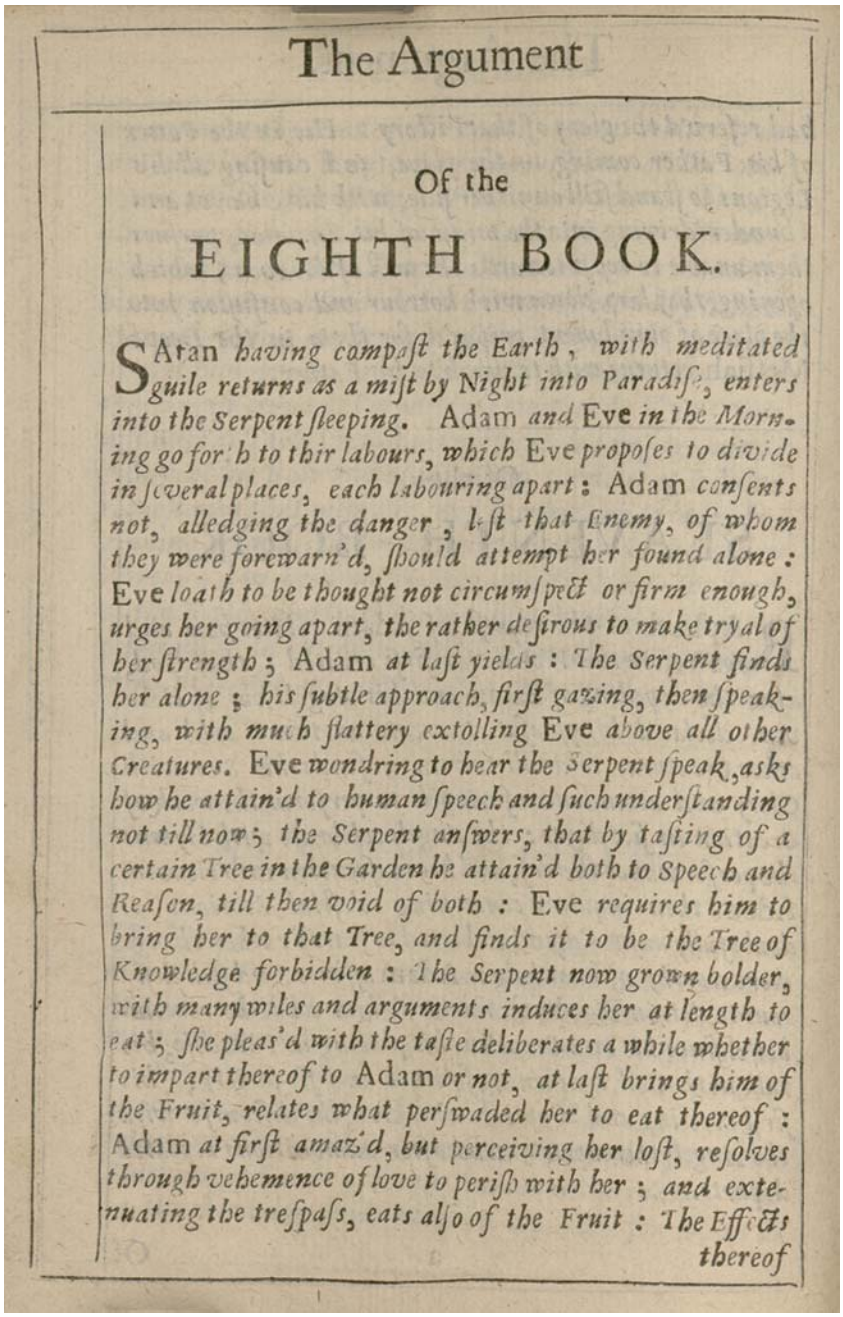
The Argument.

had reserv'd the glory of that Victory: Hee in the Power of his Father coming to the place, and causing all his Legions to stand still on either side, with his Chariot and Thunder driving into the midst of his Enemies, pursues them unable to resist towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horrour and confusion into the place of punishment prepar'd for them in the Deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

Of the
SEAVENTH BOOK.

RAphael at the request of Adam relates how and wherefore this World was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his Angels out of Heaven, declar'd his pleasure to create another World and other Creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with Glory and attendance of Angels to perform the work of Creation in six dayes: the Angels celebrate with Hymns the performance thereof, and his reascention into Heaven. Adam then inquires concerning celestial Motions, is doubtfully answer'd, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledg: Adam assents, and still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remember'd since his own Creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and Nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the Angel thereupon; who after admonitions repeated departs.

Fig. 14. Seventh Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument

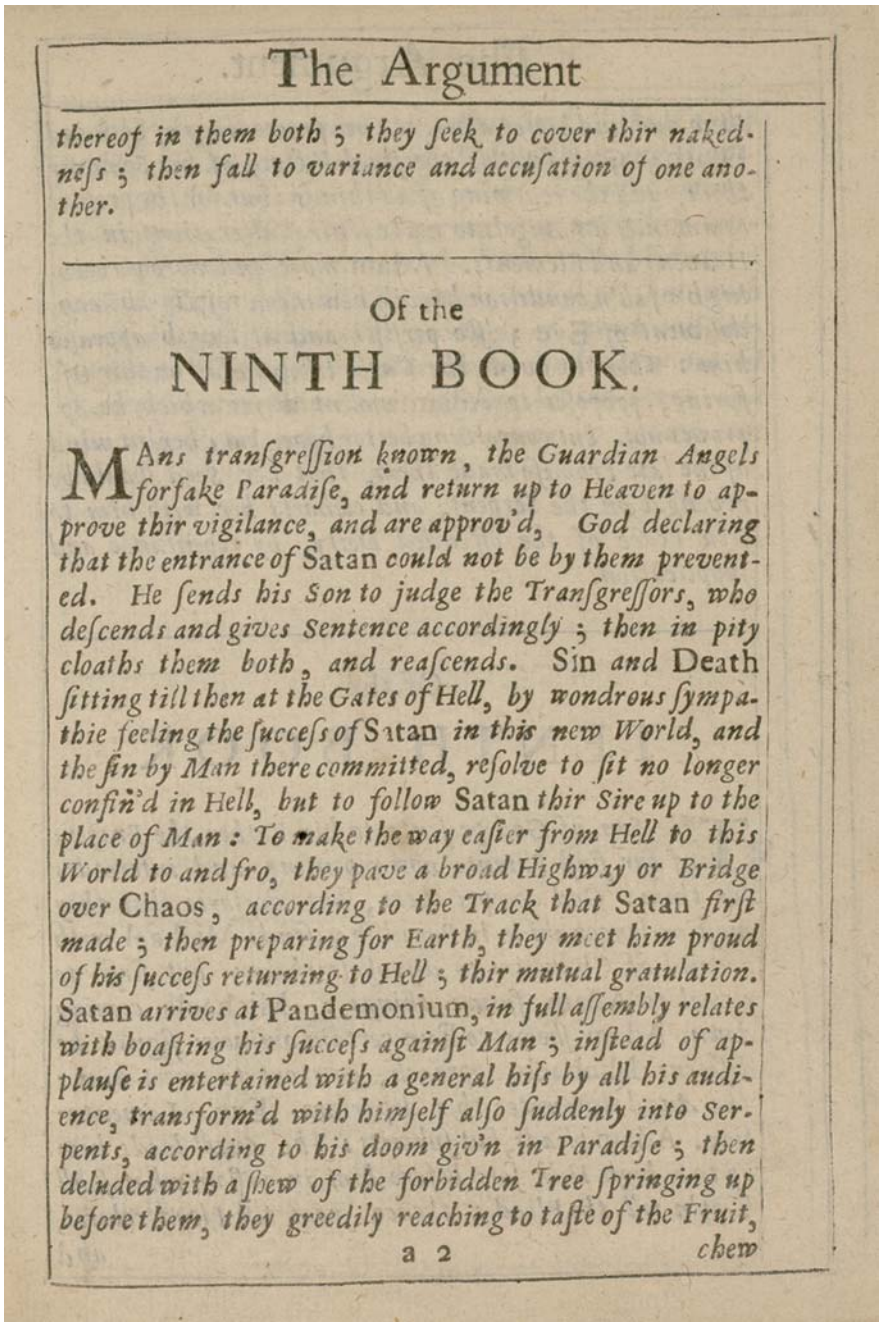
Of the

EIGHTH BOOK.

SAtan *having compaſt the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a miſt by Night into Paradiſe, enters into the Serpent ſleeping.* Adam *and* Eve *in the Morning go forth to thir labours, which* Eve *propoſes to divide in ſeveral places, each labouring apart:* Adam *conſents not, alledging the danger, leſt that Enemy, of whom they were forewarn'd, ſhould attempt her found alone:* Eve *loath to be thought not circumſpect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather deſirous to make tryal of her ſtrength;* Adam *at laſt yields: The Serpent finds her alone; his ſubtle approach, firſt gazing, then ſpeaking, with much flattery extolling* Eve *above all other Creatures.* Eve *wondring to hear the Serpent ſpeak, asks how he attain'd to human ſpeech and ſuch underſtanding not till now; the Serpent anſwers, that by taſting of a certain Tree in the Garden he attain'd both to Speech and Reaſon, till then void of both:* Eve *requires him to bring her to that Tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden: The Serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; ſhe pleas'd with the taſte deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to* Adam *or not, at laſt brings him of the Fruit, relates what perſwaded her to eat thereof:* Adam *at firſt amaz'd, but perceiving her loſt, reſolves through vehemence of love to periſh with her; and extenuating the treſpaſs, eats alſo of the Fruit: The Effects*

thereof

Fig. 15. Eighth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument

thereof in them both ; they ſeek to cover thir nakedneſs ; then fall to variance and accuſation of one another.

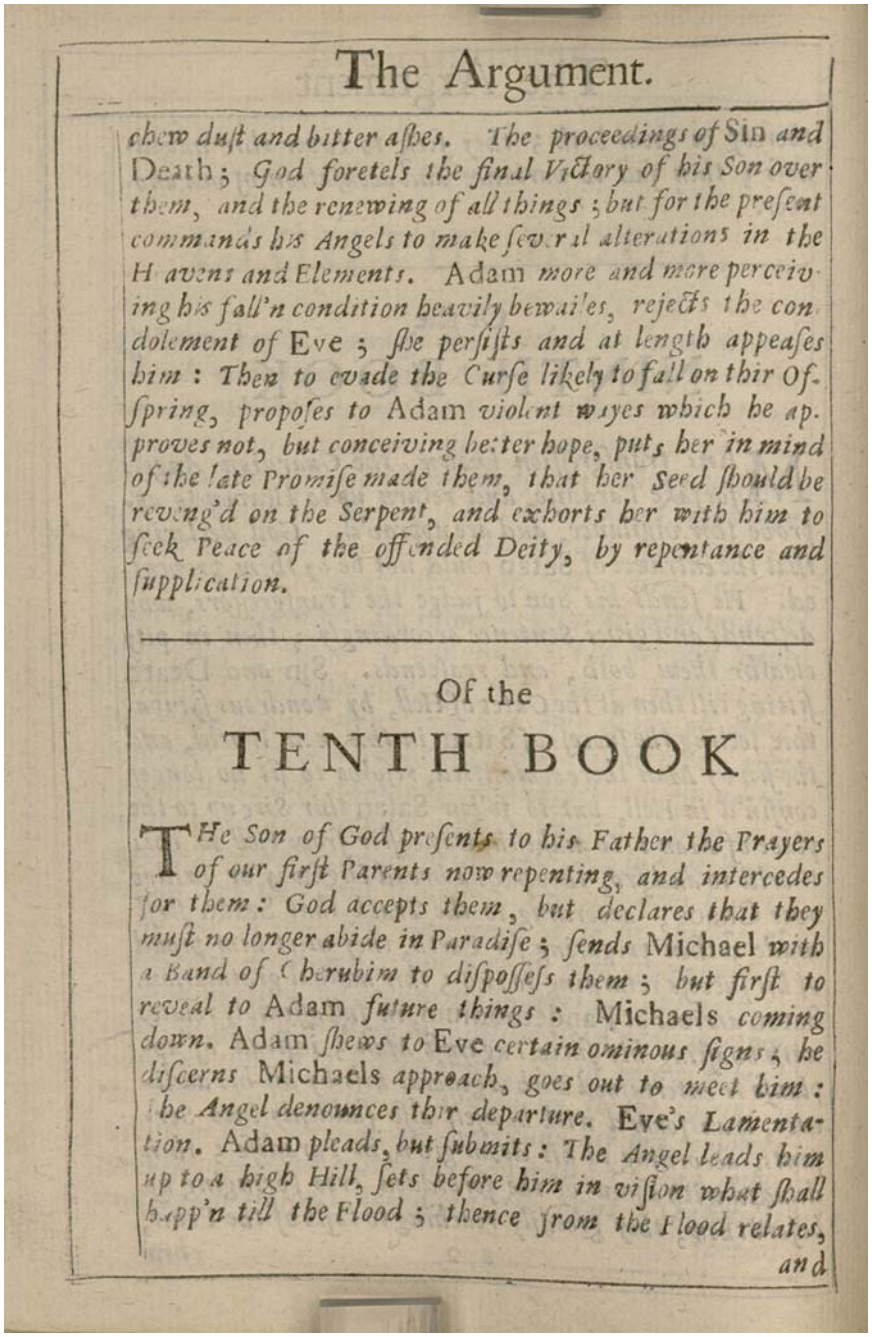
Of the

NINTH BOOK.

MAns *tranſgreſſion known, the Guardian Angels forſake Paradiſe, and return up to Heaven to approve thir vigilance, and are approv'd, God declaring that the entrance of* Satan *could not be by them prevented. He ſends his Son to judge the Tranſgreſſors, who deſcends and gives Sentence accordingly ; then in pity cloaths them both, and reaſcends.* Sin *and* Death *ſitting till then at the Gates of Hell, by wondrous ſympathie feeling the ſucceſs of* Satan *in this new World, and the ſin by Man there committed, reſolve to ſit no longer confin'd in Hell, but to follow* Satan *thir Sire up to the place of Man : To make the way eaſier from Hell to this World to and fro, they pave a broad Highway or Bridge over* Chaos, *according to the Track that* Satan *firſt made ; then preparing for Earth, they meet him proud of his ſucceſs returning to Hell ; thir mutual gratulation.* Satan *arrives at* Pandemonium, *in full aſſembly relates with boaſting his ſucceſs againſt Man ; inſtead of applauſe is entertained with a general hiſs by all his audience, transform'd with himſelf alſo ſuddenly into Serpents, according to his doom giv'n in Paradiſe ; then deluded with a ſhew of the forbidden Tree ſpringing up before them, they greedily reaching to taſte of the Fruit,*

a 2 *chew*

Fig. 16. Ninth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The Argument.

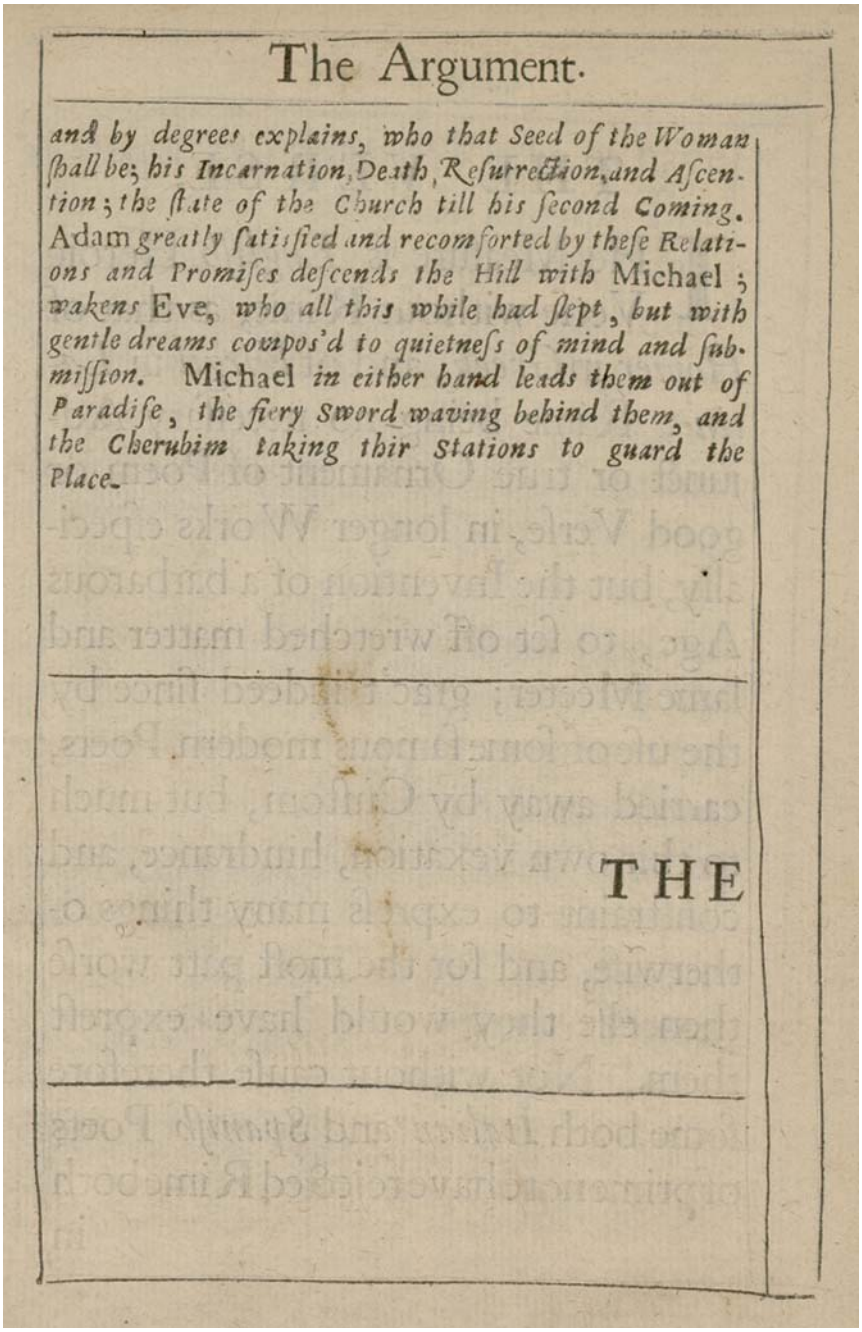
chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final Victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his Angels to make several alterations in the Heavens and Elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fall'n condition heavily bewailes, rejects the condolement of Eve; she persists and at length appeases him: Then to evade the Curse likely to fall on thir Offspring, proposes to Adam violent wayes which he approves not, but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late Promise made them, that her Seed should be reveng'd on the Serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek Peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

Of the

TENTH BOOK

THe Son of God presents to his Father the Prayers of our first Parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a Band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michaels coming down. Adam shews to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michaels approach, goes out to meet him: The Angel denounces thir departure. Eve's Lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: The Angel leads him up to a high Hill, sets before him in vision what shall happ'n till the Flood; thence from the Flood relates, and

Fig. 17. Tenth Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)

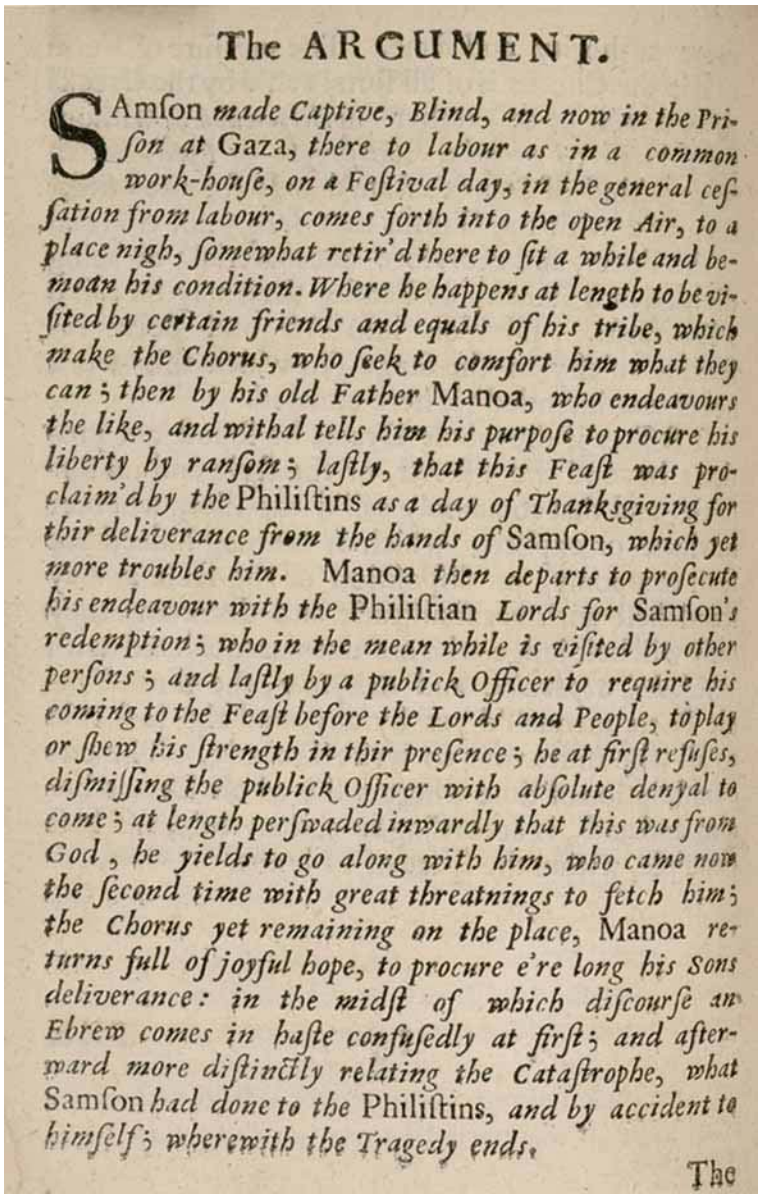


The Argument.

and by degrees explains, who that Seed of the Woman shall be; his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascention; the state of the Church till his second Coming. Adam *greatly satisfied and recomforted by these Relations and Promises descends the Hill with* Michael; *wakens* Eve, *who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams compos'd to quietness of mind and submission.* Michael *in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery Sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking thir Stations to guard the Place.*

THE

Fig. 18. Last Page of the Argument to *Paradise Lost*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wing M2139)



The ARGUMENT.

SAmſon *made Captive, Blind, and now in the Priſon at* Gaza, *there to labour as in a common work-houſe, on a Feſtival day, in the general ceſſation from labour, comes forth into the open Air, to a place nigh, ſomewhat retir'd there to ſit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be viſited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who ſeek to comfort him what they can; then by his old Father* Manoa, *who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpoſe to procure his liberty by ranſom; laſtly, that this Feaſt was proclaim'd by the* Philiſtins *as a day of Thanksgiving for thir deliverance from the hands of* Samſon, *which yet more troubles him.* Manoa *then departs to proſecute his endeavour with the* Philiſtian *Lords for* Samſon's *redemption; who in the mean while is viſited by other perſons; and laſtly by a publick Officer to require his coming to the Feaſt before the Lords and People, to play or ſhew his ſtrength in thir preſence; he at firſt refuſes, diſmiſſing the publick Officer with abſolute denyal to come; at length perſwaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the ſecond time with great threatnings to fetch him; the Chorus yet remaining on the place,* Manoa *returns full of joyful hope, to procure e're long his Sons deliverance: in the midſt of which diſcourſe an Ebrew comes in haſte confuſedly at firſt; and afterward more diſtinctly relating the Cataſtrophe, what* Samſon *had done to the* Philiſtins, *and by accident to himſelf; wherewith the Tragedy ends.*

The

Fig. 19. The Argument to *Samson Agonistes*
(Harry Ransom Center, Wrenn Library)

Above them all th' Arch-Angel. But his face
Deep ſcars of Thunder had intrench'd, and Care
Sat on his faded cheek; but under *brows* — *brow*
Of dauntleſs Courage and conſid'rate Pride — *ſat*
Waiting revenge. Cruel his Eye, but caſt
Signs of remorſe and *paſſion* to behold — *pity*
* *The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,*
(Far other once beheld in bliſs) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heav'n, and from *eternal ſplendors* flung — *ethereal Splendor*
For his revolt; yet faithful how they ſtood,
Their Glory wither'd. As when Heaven's Fire
Hath ſcath'd the foreſt Oaks or mountain Pines;
With ſinged top their ſtately growth tho' bare
Stands on the blaſted Heath. He now prepar'd
To ſpeak; whereat their doubled Ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half incloſe him round
With all his Peers: Attention held them mute.
Thrice he aſſay'd; and thrice in ſpight of Scorn,
Tears, ſuch as Angels weep, burſt forth: at laſt
Words *interwove* with ſighs found out their way: — *interrupt*

* *The Fellows and the Followers of his Crime*

O

V. 603. *But under brows Of dauntleſs Courage.*] What's *Brows of Courage?* No doubt the Author ſpoke it,

But under BROW
SAT *dauntleſs Courage and conſiderate Pride.*

Under the *Brow* the Forhead, not *Brows, ſub fronte, in ſuperciliis,* is the *Seat* of Haughtineſs and Pride both in Nature and all good Poetry.

V. 605. *Signs of Remorſe and Paſſion to behold.*] *Paſſion* is improper here, its ſignification too wide, comprehending *Diſdain, Rage,* &c. quite contrary to *Remorſe.* But without Queſtion, the Poet's Words were,

Signs of Remorſe and PITY *to behold.*

Remorſe for Himſelf, *Pity* for Them; as by and by *v.* 620. *Thrice Tears burſt from his Eyes,* before he could ſpeak to them.

V. 606. *The Fellows of his Crime, the Followers rather.*] This RATHER, this correction of what he had ſaid before, has ſomething little and low in it. For if the Word wanted correcting, why was it put down here. Beſides, the Correction offer'd is wrong: all were not *Followers.* The Archangels, his *Compeers*; were *Fellows* of his Crime; the lower Angels, the Vulgar of Heaven ſeduc'd by him, were his *Followers.* Better therefore without any Affectation,

The Fellows and the Followers of his Crime.

V. 610. *And from* eternal Splendors *flung.*] *Splendors* muſt mean here the Perſons of the happy Angels: as V. 249. He calls them *Caleſtial Ardors.* But the Poet muſt mean here the *Place,* not the *Company* of Heaven: he gave it therefore,

Of Heav'n, and from ETHEREAL SPLENDOR *flung.*

V. 621. *Words* interwove *with Sighs.*] To *interweave Words and Sighs* together, paſſes, I preſume, all human Skill, and is peculiar to *Satan.*

Fig. 20. Sample Page from Bentley's Edition of *Paradise Lost* (1732)

Reſtore us, and regain the bliſsful ſeat, 5

Sing

of one long and one ſhort ſyllable ¯ ˘, as in v. 49.

Who durſt defy th' Omnĭpotent to arms.

Sometimes the Spondee or foot of two long ſyllables ¯ ¯, as in v. 21.

Dove-like sātſt brōoding on the vaſt abyſs.

Sometimes the Pyrrichius or foot of two ſhort ſyllables ˘ ˘, as in v. 64.

Serv'd only tŏ diſcover ſights of woe.

Sometimes the Dactyle or foot of one long and two ſhort ſyllables ¯ ˘ ˘, as in v. 45.

Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ĕthĕrĕal sky.

Sometimes the Anapæſt or foot of two ſhort and one long ſyllable ˘ ˘ ¯, as in v. 87.

Mўrĭāds though bright! If he whom mutual league

Sometimes the Tribrachus or foot of three ſhort ſyllables ˘ ˘ ˘, as in v. 709.

Tŏ măny a row of pipes the ſound-board breathes.

And ſometimes there is variety of theſe meaſures in the ſame verſe, and ſeldom or never the ſame meaſures in two verſes together. And theſe changes are not only rung for the ſake of the greater variety, but are ſo contriv'd as to make the ſound more expreſſive of the ſenſe. And this is another great art of verſification, the adapting of the very ſounds, as well as words, to the ſubject matter, the ſtile of ſound, as Mr. Pope calls it: and in this Milton is excellent as in all the reſt, and we ſhall give ſeveral inſtances of it in the courſe of theſe remarks. So that he has abundantly exemplified in his own practice the rules laid down by himſelf in his preface, his verſification having all the requiſites of *true muſical delight*, *which* as he ſays *conſiſts only in apt numbers, fit quantity of ſyllables, and the ſenſe variouſly drawn out from one verſe into another.*

1. *Of Man's firſt diſobedience* ----]

Μηνιν αειδε. Iliad.

Ανδρα μοι εννεπε. Odyſſ.

Arma virumque cano. Æneid.

In all theſe inſtances, as in Milton, the ſubject of the poem is the very firſt thing offer'd to us, and precedes the verb with which it is connected. It muſt be confeſſed that Horace did not regard this, when he tranſlated the firſt line of the Odyſſey, Dic mihi Muſa virum, &c. De Art. Poet. 141. And Lucian, if I remember right, makes a jeſt of this obſervation, where he introduces the ſhade of Homer as expreſsly declaring that he had no other reaſon for making the word μηνιν the firſt in his poem, but that it was the firſt which came into his head. However the uniform practice of Homer, Virgil, and Milton in this particular, ſeems to prove that it was not accidental, but a thing really deſign'd by them.

4. *With loſs of Eden*,] But Eden was not loſt, and the laſt that we read of our firſt parents is that they were ſtill in Eden,

Through Eden took their ſolitary way.

With loſs of Eden therefore means no more than *with loſs of Paradiſe*, which was planted in Eden, which word *Eden* ſignifies delight or pleaſure, and the country is ſuppoſed to be the ſame that was afterwards called Meſopotamia; particularly by our author in IV. 210. &c. Here the whole is put for a part, as ſometimes a part for the whole, by a figure called Synecdoche.

4. ------- *till one greater Man*

Reſtore us, and regain the bliſsful ſeat,]

As it is a *greater Man*, ſo it is a happier Paradiſe which our Saviour promis'd to the penitent thief, Luke XXIII. 43. *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* But Milton had a notion that after the conflagration and the general judgment

Fig. 21. Sample Page from Newton's Edition of *Paradise Lost* (1749)

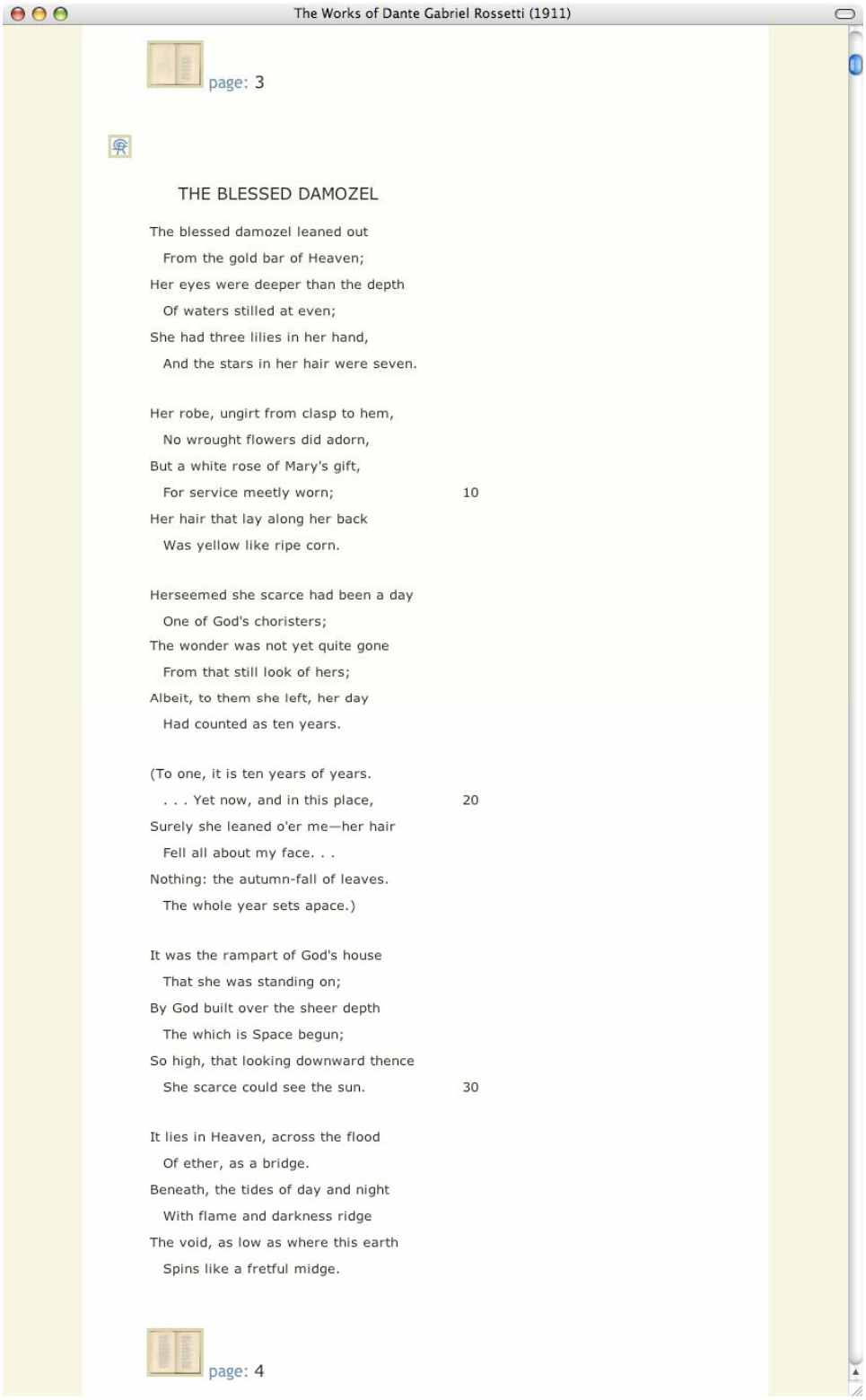


Fig. 22. Screenshot of the *Rossetti Archive*

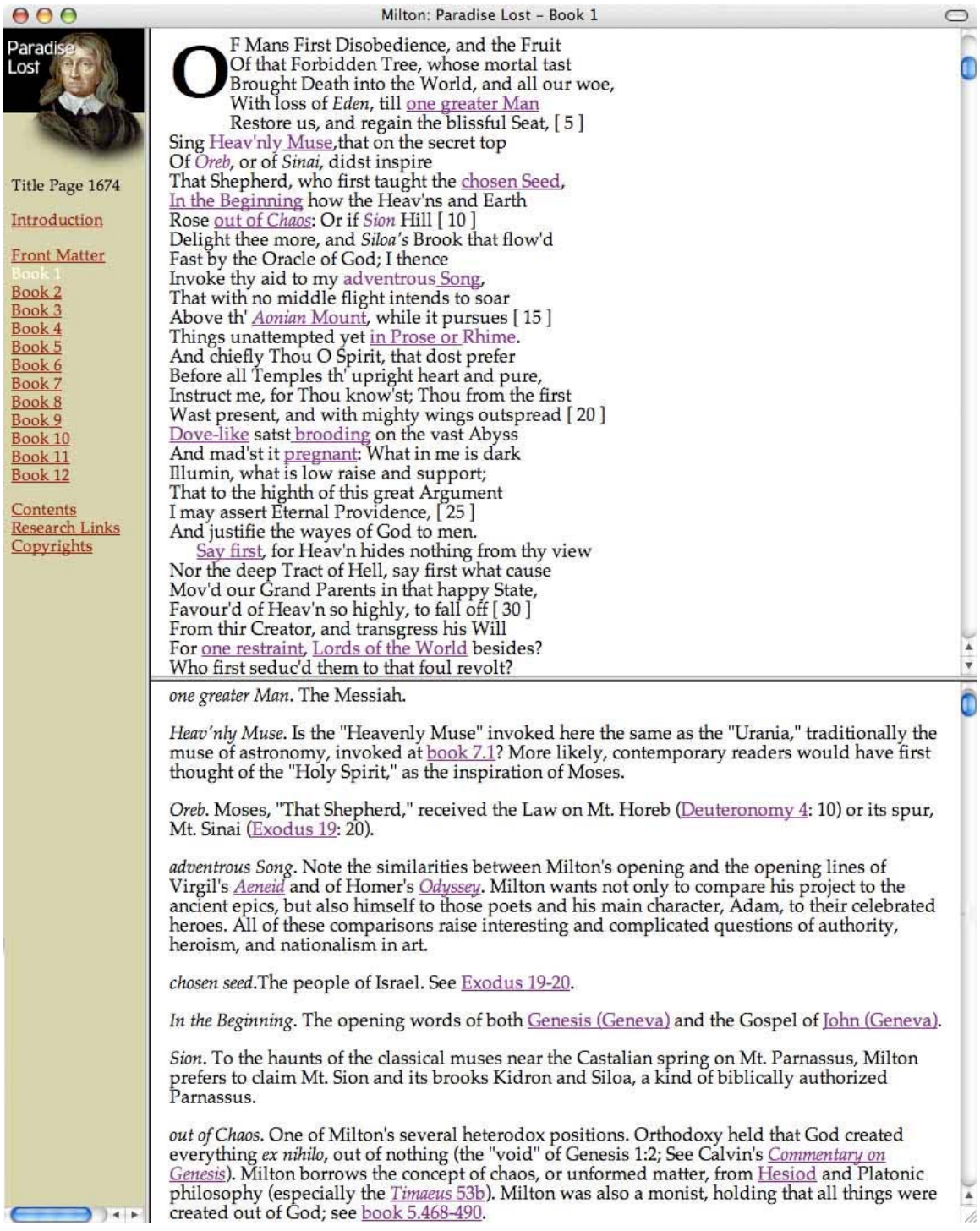


Fig. 23. Screenshot of *The John Milton Reading Room*

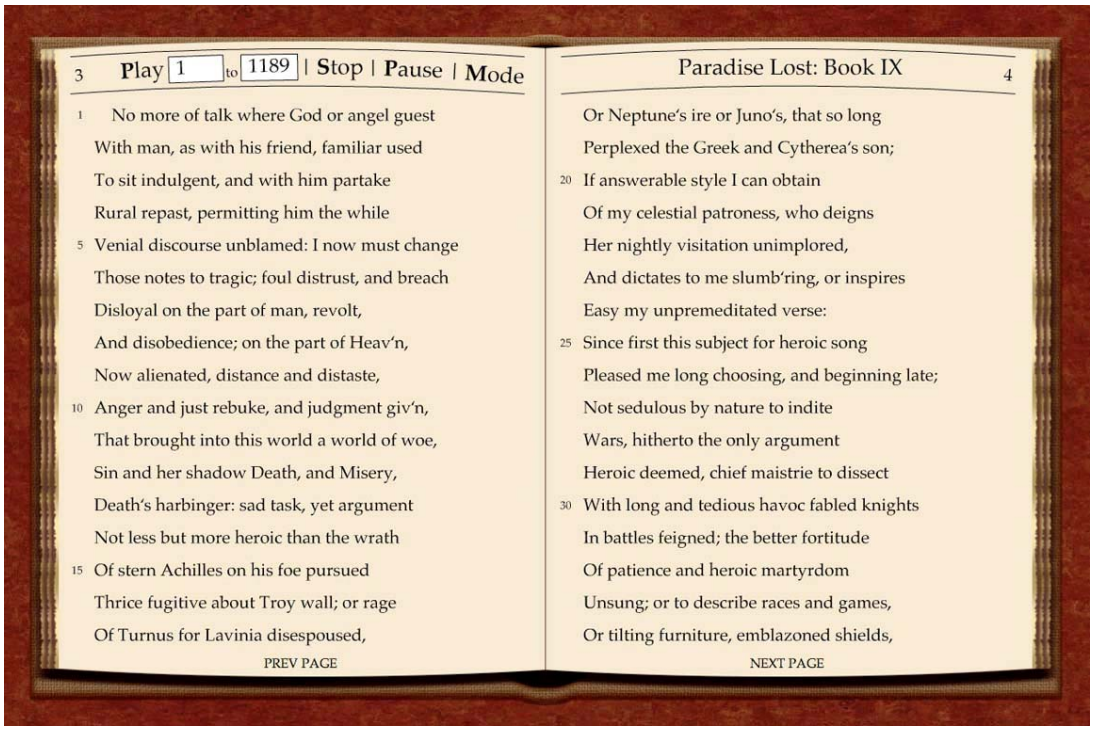


Fig. 24. Text-Only Mode of Audiotext Prototype

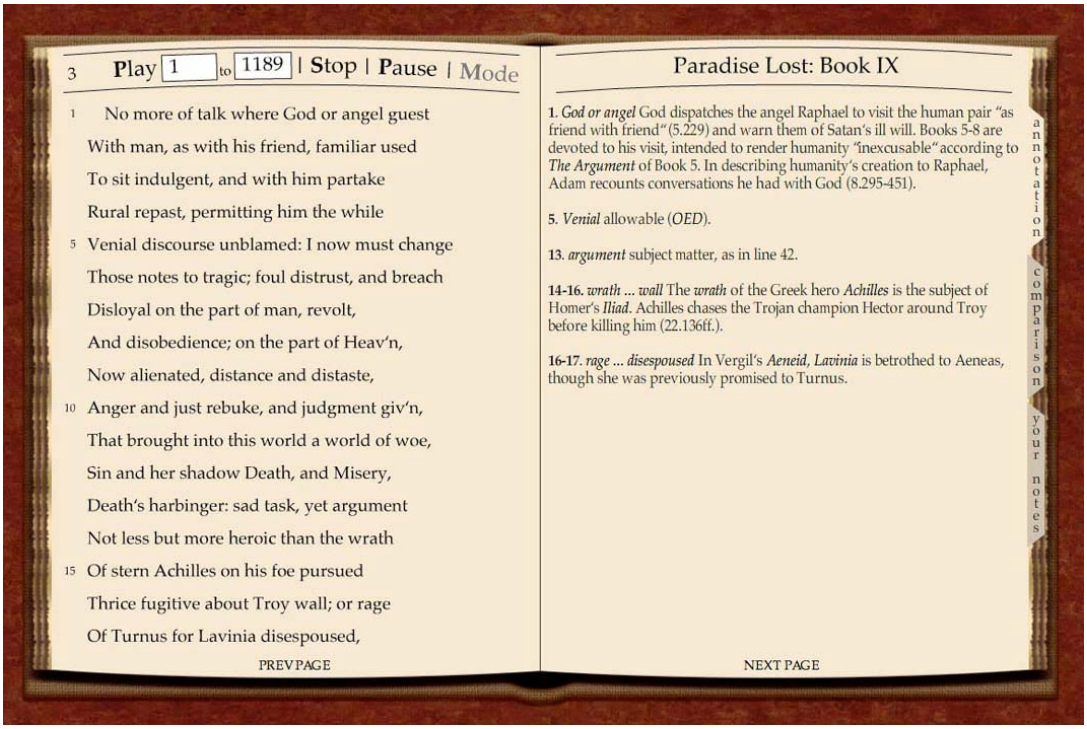


Fig. 25. Annotation Mode of Audiotext Prototype

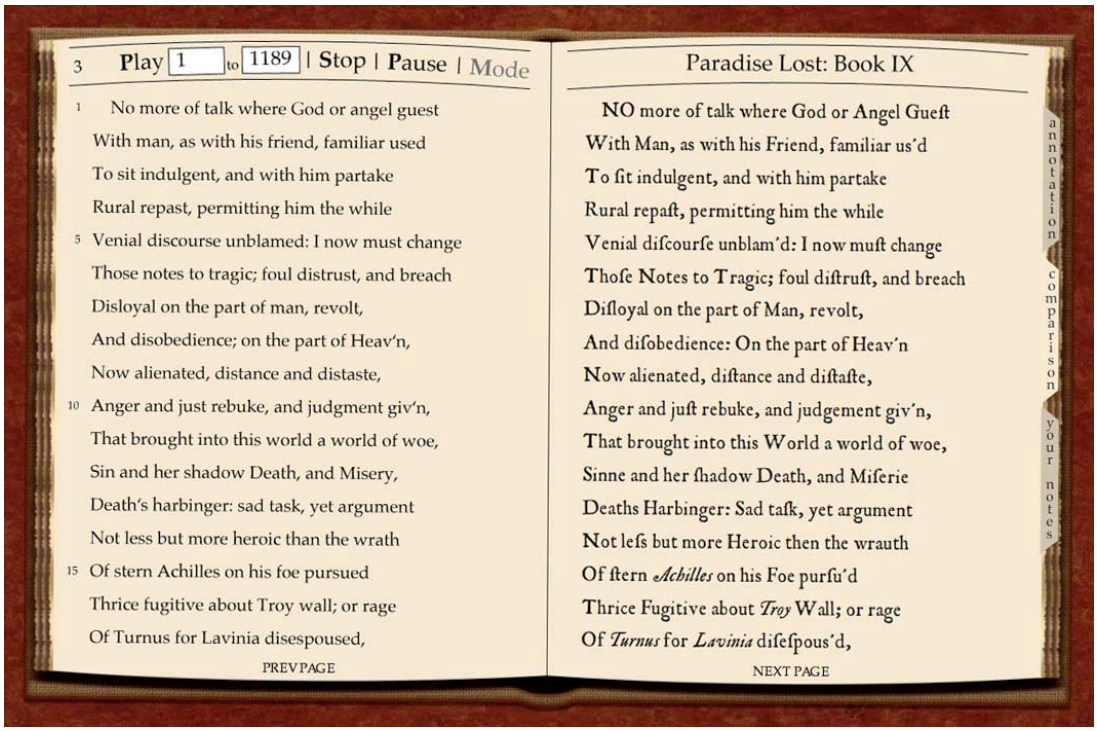


Fig. 26. Comparison Mode of Audiotext Prototype

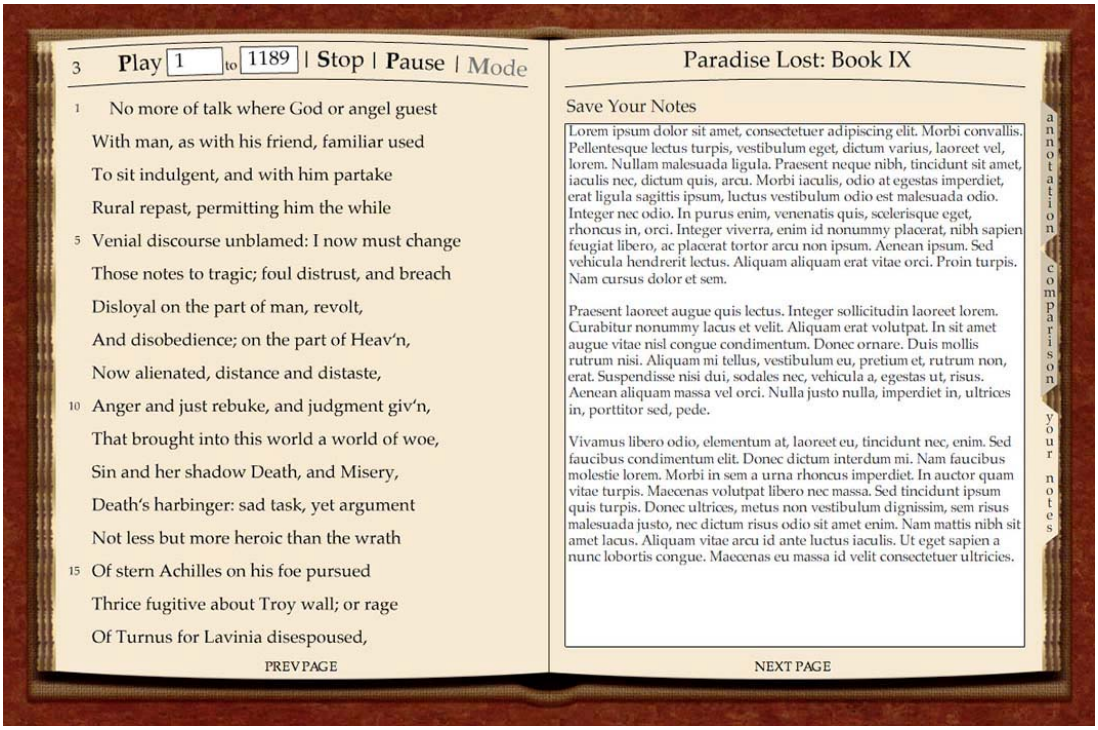


Fig. 27. Your Notes Mode of Audiotext Prototype

Bibliography

I have divided this bibliography into three sections. The first section, which lists editions of John Milton's works, is organized alphabetically by editor. If no editor is named, I consider the publisher the editor. The second section, which lists works first published in the nineteenth century or later, is organized alphabetically by author except in cases where the editor is of more interest to this study. The third section, which lists works first published in the eighteenth century or earlier, is organized alphabetically by author and multiple editions or translations of the same work are sorted chronologically.

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Vita

Olin Bjork was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan on October 6, 1970, the son of Elizabeth Ligon Bjork and Robert Allen Bjork. After completing his work at University High School, Los Angeles, California, he entered St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. After two years, he transferred to the University of California at Los Angeles, where he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1993. In 1998, he entered graduate school in English at the University of Texas, where he received the degree of Master of Arts in 2000. He also received a certificate in Certificate in Elements of Computing from UT's Department of Computer Sciences in 2004. In addition to teaching English and Rhetoric and Writing from 2000-2005, he served as Webmaster of UT's English Department from 2001-2002 and Assistant Director of UT's Computer Writing and Research Lab from 2003-2005. For the last three years, he has worked for UT's Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services as technical editor of the *Paradise Lost* audiotexts project. He is now in his first year as a Marion L. Brittain Fellow at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Permanent Address: 10807 Rochester Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90024

This dissertation was typed by the author.